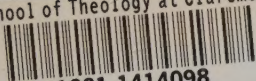


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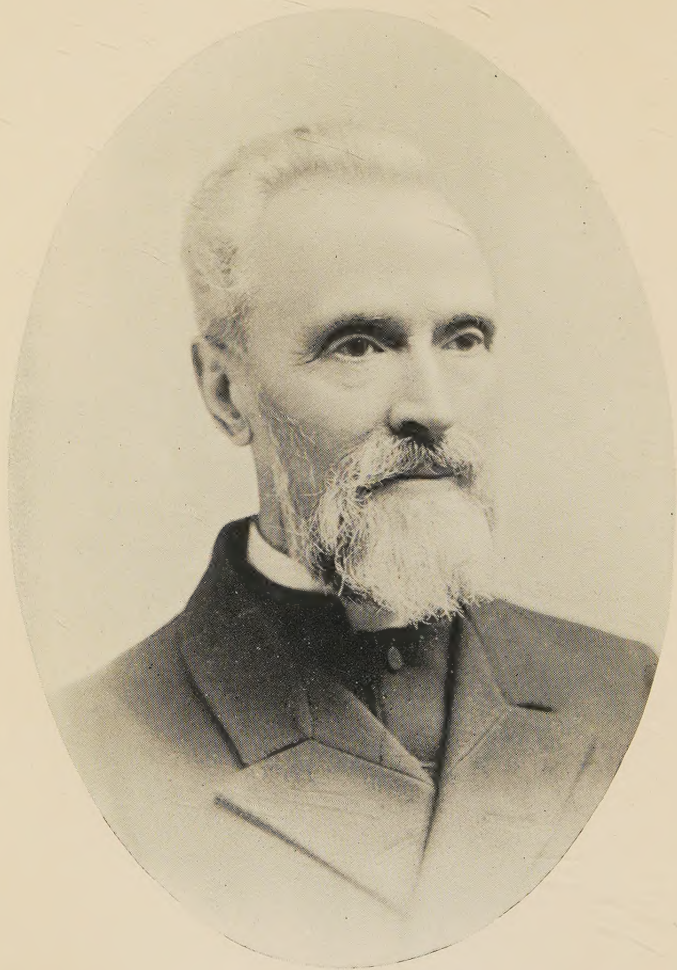
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# JOHN BRASH

MEMORIALS AND CORRESPONDENCE

*Edited by*

REV. I. E. PAGE

Author of

'The Keynote of Life,' 'Jesus Christ Has Come,' &c.

'The law of truth was in his mouth,  
and iniquity was not found in his lips :  
he walked with Me in peace and equity,  
and did turn many from iniquity.'

*Mal. ii. 6*

London

CHARLES H. KELLY

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In Loving Memory  
OF  
MY DEAR FRIEND  
(AND HIS FRIEND),  
T. H. BAINBRIDGE, J.P.,  
ESHOTT,  
NORTHUMBERLAND.

The words he spake, the thoughts he penned,  
Are mortal as his hand and brain ;  
But if they served the Master's end  
He has not lived in vain !

WHITTIER.

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## TWO MEN

FOR more than forty years they were intimate friends ; nor came there, during that long companionship, any intervening misunderstanding to mar its perfectness. John, the elder by eight years, was a man of sedate, well-ordered mind, whose characteristic was unblemished, fervent saint-hood ; on him the younger man rested, since he was impulsive, with such tendencies to depression as adhere to the sanguine temperament. Thus one man was the complement of the other. After many years of intimacy John wrote thus to his friend :

‘ If we two could be rolled into one—you with your spirit of restless activity and I with my constitutional indolence, and my almost unconquerable aversion to write a line that is likely to appear in print—and then be equally divided, the result would be two fairly decent men. As it is, each must bear his own cross, and face his easily besetting sin—for it is an easily besetting sin on both sides. Thank God for *Him* who is Himself the supply of all our need, if only we will allow Him to be all He wills to be.’

During the years of their intimacy no opportunity of meeting was neglected, and they exchanged letters every week ; if on either side the usual letter failed, a blank was left in the days. They were co-partners in the gladnesses, cares and griefs of life ; when sickness or sorrow visited one, the other became his

natural and sympathetic comforter. So their letters were self-revelations, recording whatever was important in their belief, hopes, and personal history. Since both interest and value belong to an insight into the interior life of a true man, it is believed that these selections from a long correspondence, with brief interlinking words from the survivor's memory, will be of service.

It was thus the two men were first brought together. The elder, then minister in a West Riding town, made the acquaintance of J. Clapham Greaves, who was home on vacation. These two proved to be of kindred spirit, and their meeting, in the later view of its far-reaching consequences, seemed a special providence. John, on leaving Hammersmith, had received invitations from Leeds and Birstall circuits, and, somewhat against his personal inclination, had chosen the latter sphere, where his residence was Batley. Concerning this decision he wrote years after :

‘ If I had gone to Leeds J. Clapham Greaves would not have heard me preach that week-night sermon on entire sanctification which brought me into the association that has so powerfully influenced my public course. Perhaps, too, God used me for better work in Batley than I could have done in Leeds.’

While these two ministers, meeting thus in the North of England, entered into a brotherly fellowship, about the same time two others, nearly of the same age, met in Kent. These also found themselves in touch concerning the deeper experiences of religion ; both were dissatisfied, both hungered for better things. Opening their hearts to each other,



they became attached friends. Presently the four were brought together. At the May Meetings in London one of these entertained his friend from the South, with results which will never be told. Almost throughout the night they conversed and prayed, until the visitor was able to consecrate himself wholly to Christ. He carried tidings of his new experience to his friend, and soon there were four men in correspondence with one another, united in the one purpose to live wholly for God, and to set forth that salvation through His Son which is 'unto the uttermost.' They began to hold meetings for Christians, issued a series of tracts on Scriptural Holiness, and in 1872 began the publishing of *The King's Highway*, which, month by month, expounded entire sanctification as a doctrine, an experience, and a life. It is enough to say that, after some years, two of the company devoted themselves to other ministries; while John and his friend continued to the end their association as editors of the magazine. For nearly half a century these two men lived in each other's affection and confidence. Now and again their opinions diverged, but nothing occurred to dim the serene light of their fellowship in Christ.

'It is remarkable,' wrote John, some months before his departure, 'that during so long a friendship there should never have been, as you say, even "a ripple of misunderstanding." I have counted it one of the special blessings of God's providence that we were brought into intercourse with each other.'

What the love, the example and wise counsels of John Brash meant to his friend cannot be told; but these words, among the last of an intimate

correspondence, express what the survivor feels concerning his priceless friendship :

‘ A day or two ago, when reviewing my mercies, I wondered whether I had been as thankful to God as I ought for the providence and grace that gave me a friend in full sympathy with all my aspirations after Himself, a friend who through forty long years has never once failed me, but week by week has written me some words of comfort or encouragement or stimulus, bringing many a gleam of brightness into my heart. Seriously, I don’t know what life would have been to me without you.’

Two men : to-day one on either side of the separating river ; one enjoying the heavenly rest, while the other, here on earth, is undertaking the pathetic task of editing these selections, in the hope that John’s ministry may be perpetuated now that his living voice and the hand which held the pen can minister no longer.

## INTRODUCTORY SKETCH

NEARLY eighty years ago, two small children were left together in a cottage near Garstang, in Lancashire, with strict injunctions not to go near the water. Close by was the canal, and into this one child, unheeding the warning, fell. He would have been inevitably drowned had not a lad, working on a coal-wharf near by, heard the splash and run to the rescue. The child had struggled out of reach ; but the youth had the sense to take off his jacket and throw it towards the struggling boy, who clutched it, and was drawn out. That child so nearly drowned was John Brash. How much to the Church of Christ depended on the good deed of that unnamed rescuer !

Sixty years later, John Brash and his friend visited the spot where he fell in, and he recalled his unforgettable sensations on that fateful day.

The following sketch gives a mere glimpse of a beautiful life. Outwardly, to thousands this man was the faithful Christian minister, a setter-forth of the deeper spiritual verities ; one who not only saw the promised land distantly, as Moses, but, standing amid its fair fields, beckoned others to follow. The servant of Jesus Christ has his own specific message, and a constituency to which it appeals ; to them he is specially ' the minister of God for good,' and they naturally desire further knowledge of one

whose personality was the spring-head of many dividing refreshing streams.

It was said at the funeral service in Wavertree Church, by one whose words were weighed : ' In him, holiness was a transparency. Yet " he wist not that his face shone." ' If I mention that for forty-three years it was my happiness to enjoy a close and uninterrupted friendship with him, it is that I may testify that, through all those years of intimacy, I never saw in him, either in spirit, word, or deed, anything out of harmony with the spirit of Jesus.' John Brash is worthy of a place in the bright succession of Methodist saints. He was born November 8, 1830 ; his long day of life closed peacefully April 19, 1912. Between dawn and sunset lay a day of gracious fruitful service.

John came of a good stock. His father was a faithful and honoured local preacher, his mother a woman of strong character and deep piety. Though his early life was influenced by spiritual forces, his majority was reached before his actual decision for Christ ; even after that he fell back into doubt, recovering an assurance which never after failed through an address by Mr. Isaac Marsden—an eccentric man of power, who won thousands for God. John was soon at work for others ; became a local preacher, and at a District Synod held in Chester, May, 1857, he was accepted as a candidate for the Wesleyan Ministry, with three others—Arthur Wilkinson, Thomas Allen, and William Briggs. Each of the latter rose to be President of Conference. The vote of the Synod that day started four men on a successful career, nor was John Brash the least eminent of them. A shrinking modesty

held him back from positions he might have worthily filled. Transparency of character was manifest alike in his thinking and in that lucidity of speech which charmed his hearers. The writer first heard him in 1872, when he preached on 'praying everywhere, lifting up holy hands without wrath or doubting.' He began simply, as a teacher would address children; but in ten minutes he had the congregation in his hand, and great power attended that long-remembered service. Alike in the pulpit, on the convention platform, in the class-meeting, and in familiar social intercourse, his speech was marked by the same clearness of thought, the same truthful directness of language.

Of course, he had his limitations. He lacked that spirit of unresting enterprise which Dr. Stalker regards as St. Paul's second great natural gift; and like the apostle, he had little or no enjoyment in the beauties of nature.

At Reading a strip of garden lay behind his house, cultivated by his housekeeper, who loved flowers. When the writer was staying with him, he said, 'I *may* have walked down the garden since coming here, but I cannot remember doing so.' In that house he lost his gentle-spirited wife, in many ways the counterpart of himself. It was surprising that, with his fine literary taste and gifts of speech, he wrote so little for the press. Articles in *The King's Highway*, and a small compilation, entitled *Our Lovefeast*, represented his total literary output. The gift 'divided' to him was not literary but pastoral—public speaking and a personal influence most effective of all. He was more many-sided than those were aware of who knew him only as a spiritual

teacher. Such would scarcely think of him as spending hours playing the violin, delighting in the works of Shakespeare, reading over and over *Don Quixote*, or the novels of Scott, Thackeray, and Dickens. He was a man of varied tastes and acquirements, wholesomely broad in his views, yet from the centre of his life to its farthest circumference was spread the light of a perfect consecration.

One or two passages from his later letters will give glimpses of his inner life.

‘ I agree heartily with what you say about theological discussions losing their interest as life advances. The simplicity of faith in Christ as the Saviour who died for me, and in whom I died, has come to me lately with the vividness of a new revelation. One morning I could have shouted in the joy of so complete a deliverance. Why are men so slow to believe the message and to open their hearts to receive the Holy Spirit—the Spirit of love ? Is it that we preachers don’t make the way so simple as we should ? ’

In our correspondence we often discussed the question of power in relation to service. In one of his letters he told of a devout clergyman who spent hours of prayer before a meeting to which he went expecting great things—and failed, to his disappointment and that of his hearers. Mr. Brash said : ‘ He was too much with God, distracting his thoughts from the people. Perhaps the failure resulted from exhausted nervous energy.’ The deepest note is touched in the extracts which follow :



' In truth, the holy, the useful life is one of happy freedom in God. Christ has redeemed the world by His death ; He " will have all men to be saved " ; His plans are laid. What He expects from us is that we shall each take up that little piece of His plan set before us, doing it in cheerful confidence that no part of His covenant will fail ; that the needful power is given. Then we may give it up to some one else to finish, and take up another piece of work. It is not given us to finish anything. It would help us to know just how much of God's work we can leave with Him, and how much is ours.

. . . . .

' I count it among my special mercies that I am never so much as tempted to doubt His wisdom or His love. I *know* that all is right and will come out right at last. He will call me to Himself just at the right time. And when I am too weak for everything else I can still *trust*.

O Love, Thou bottomless abyss,  
My sins are swallowed up in Thee.

That is enough.

. . . . .

' Do you know what it is to be impressed by a word ? Lately, the word *grace*, especially as used in Galatians, has come to me morning, noon, and night, with a fullness of meaning it never had before. What an infinite mercy it is that salvation from beginning to end is *by grace* ! How useless and how needless to look anywhere for merit, and how simple just to take ! This has a commonplace

look now it is written, and yet it has meant so much to me.

‘ During the last few weeks I have had what amounts to a revelation of the nearness of Jesus Christ to both sinner and saint, and the absolute simplicity of faith in Him, first for pardon, then for purity. To myself this vision is more than I can tell, but I don’t seem to have yet learnt how to put it into words.’

John Brash was a man in whose heart the peace of God ruled. One of his favourite texts was, ‘ There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.’ But he had his struggles. Once during a moorland walk the writer said to him, ‘ You have not the inward tumults some of us pass through.’ His characteristic reply was, ‘ I burn my own smoke.’

The following describes such a period of conflict :

‘ It is just where I was many years ago, but having no friend to guard and guide me along the line upon which I entered, I wandered off into sheer pantheism : all was GOD—the evil as well as the good, all was God ; there was no good or evil. I felt I ought to resign ; but it seemed to me that I was doing no one either good or harm, and might as well continue a while longer. They were dark days, and yet I was living in the conscious presence of God. I was intensely earnest, and my health was suffering, Deliverance came to me while reading Bushnell on *Nature and the Supernatural*, through a clear, bright sudden revelation of God as the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, *my Father*, and with it something of

St. Paul's passionate love for the unsaved, for whom Christ died. This was as I was leaving Wigan. In the providence of God I was led into the Keighley Circuit, to which I went with the freedom of a bird escaped from the snare of the fowler, and where began an uninterrupted career of success in soul-winning that lasted many years. The remembrance of the scorching has made me rather shy when I come into the presence of mystical teaching, which has always had a fascination for me.'

A sentence from his last letter, written within a short period of his departure, will not unfitly close this introductory sketch :

'My resolve was to spend Good Friday with my Lord, but I was disappointed. I was flat, heavy, and drowsy, and the day was unprofitable. One fact, however, shone out very brightly—Christ, through His atonement, presented me to His Father, who gave me the gracious assurance that I had a share in all those New Covenant blessings which are the heritage of all God's children here and hereafter. Surely that is enough. In the face of so transcendent a fact discontent would be a shame.'

So this man of God passed to his rest, to enjoy 'quietness and assurance for ever.'

This sketch, reproduced from *The Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, is inserted for the sake of readers who never knew John Brash personally, to prepare them for this study of his personality and teaching.

The life of every true man is an endeavour to interpret life, the means being observation,

reading, reflection, and experience. The gathered result represents that man's contribution to the philosophy of life. The Christian, starting with a knowledge of God and His revealed will, accepts Jesus Christ as teacher and model, finding in Him at once life's explanation and its highest good. The self-revelations of autobiography are valuable to those who wish to know the heart of a man's religion. The ministry of a Christian life reaches far beyond itself—as the message of the Hebrew prophets spoke beyond their own day.

We ask then, What was this man's ministry, his particular contribution to his generation and to the kingdom of Christ? What was his specific message, uttered in public teaching, by his pen, and by long experience of service and suffering? What were his deepest convictions concerning revealed religion and duty, his views of the ever-varying movements of thought and church life to-day? And what his Christian testimony, after months of seclusion and affliction, in the near prospect of death? The answer is given in these chapters. If John Brash made it his *first* business to realize character, yet he did not fail of a unique ministry for his Lord and his fellow men.

## CHAPTER I

### THE COURSE OF HIS MINISTRY

The First Six Years—A Hard Time—The Brontë Family—His Oakworth Ministry—Memories of Batley—Later Ministries.

AFTER this cursory glance at the character and life-work of our subject, it may be desirable to sketch very briefly the course of a ministry so lengthened and rich in blessing to many. To survey it is like glancing over a fair and varied landscape, over which, as we look, sunbeams flit, and shadows of clouds. Amid all his activities he was a sufferer.

Accepted for the Wesleyan Methodist ministry in the year 1857, he was at once appointed, without college training, to Ramsey in the Isle of Man, where he met Susan Henderson, who became his wife. His own words have already shown how fruitful was his ministry in its earliest sphere.

After two years he removed to Ormskirk in Lancashire, whither, after his ordination at Newcastle-on-Tyne in 1861, he took his bride. Their first home was in the village of Mawdsley. His superintendent was Joseph Garrett, a faithful man who had been twenty years in the ministry, and who, in full age, closed his career in 1896.

Ormskirk demands a fuller notice than his later circuits, since there his powers were developed, and his methods of work received the divine sanction in

many conversions. The records of membership given in the *Minutes of Conference* show an increase of one hundred and twenty-nine in the three years.

During the Ormskirk period he suffered acutely from persistent attacks of neuralgia, and was scarcely able to preach at times because of excessive pain. Evidently nervous exhaustion accounts for the experience detailed in the words which follow. How many Christian workers have suffered similarly, understanding the real cause only after many years! Close is the alliance between the physical and the spiritual.

#### A HARD TIME

‘I understand so well that “hard time.” It was a very familiar experience of mine in the most successful period of my ministry. I have a distinct recollection of five occasions in my life when the veil between me and the invisible world was lifted in a way more real than any words of mine can express, and when nothing would have seemed more natural than for the Lord Jesus Christ to have stood visibly before me and talked with me. One of these occasions was in Ormskirk on a Sunday evening about half-an-hour before service time. I went to the chapel with high expectation, and from various circumstances, the expectation of the people also was high. But the service was literally the poorest, flattest service it was my lot to conduct in all that circuit during my three years’ ministry there. I do not speak of my own feeling merely. It was the opinion of spiritually-minded men like John Wainwright, senior, and of the people generally, who did



not hesitate to express their disappointment. The truth was—at least, so I think—that I was suffering from nervous collapse. I gradually learnt that the best thing was to keep quiet before a service, and not allow myself to be exhausted. *Quiet*

‘What I found when I came to myself was that even the best instruments are sometimes out of tune from physical causes, leading to spiritual ineffectiveness for which we may or may not be to blame. We are responsible to God for being at our best always. If we are below the best through circumstances beyond our control, there will be ineffectiveness, though we may not be culpable. But we cannot get outside that environment which places us at the mercy of law, physical and spiritual. The comforting thought is that God will get something out of us in the long run, though there may be great inequalities in our service.’ *Body*

After one year in Wigan he was appointed in 1863 to Keighley in the West Riding, where he resided at Haworth, and fulfilled a happy and successful ministry amid the wild scenery and homely folks of the Brontë country. His circuit steward was Mr. Isaac Holden (afterwards Sir Isaac Holden), who showed him appreciation and much kindness. When his friend, years later, asked him to record his notes on the Brontë family, he replied :

‘. . . That Brontë information was not valuable, but very stale. The truth has been told a hundred times. I only named it as having come to me first hand from the family doctor. But many of the Brontë worshippers have had long conversations with him. I learnt what I possibly could of the

group, but it came to very little. The girls were often on the moors together, but they kept themselves singularly aloof from their neighbours. They were, however, inveterate gossips, and eagerly picked up all the news they could from servants, charwomen, and persons of that sort. Charlotte profited by what she picked up in this way. I knew some of the people—Methodists—who figured in her stories to anything but advantage.

‘I knew Martha, the old servant, who used to show me pencil drawings, MS. tales, in books court envelope size, written by the sisters for each other in small minute characters. I did not venture to ask for one, thinking they might have a marketable value.’

An increased church-membership of nearly 200 attested the prosperity of his Keighley ministry.

#### HIS OAKWORTH MINISTRY

The Rev. H. H. Hoole has furnished this memory of Oakworth, 1863–66 :

‘A tall man, very feeble, made many friends here. Chapel well filled each Sunday evening. Membership largely increased during his ministry, over 400 when he removed. His sermons were of two kinds, mornings to believers, evenings to sinners. Pastoral visitation a very strong point, and most assiduously carried out. Visited persons regularly that no other pastor could get hold of—one case in particular, where lived a man, his wife and family. The man, a rough character, never entered a place of worship except in connexion with a funeral, and followed the occupation of a handcomber (work

much in evidence in the cottages at that period). He worked up in the attic, and when Mr. Brash visited the house, praying with the man's wife, who was a good Christian woman, the man would cease working, and be very still, hoping Mr. Brash would go away, but he always went upstairs and prayed with him, although the man always assumed an air of perfect indifference. After Mr. Brash left the circuit he was often invited back for various anniversaries, and this man always went once to chapel to hear him. Mr. Brash's memory is cherished yet by the people who knew him, although more than forty years have passed.'

The change from Haworth to his next appointment was great. Hammersmith, with its wealthy suburban residents, presented features altogether new. Here he was admitted to the friendship of William Arthur, who was a supernumerary through loss of voice, and of Mr. and Mrs. Farmer-Atkinson of Gunnersbury House. He was still a sufferer; brain congestion often produced terrible headaches. In 1869 he removed again to Yorkshire—one of five ministers in the Birstall Circuit, his residence being Batley. His ministry here also was marked by great converting power; it was said, indeed, that nothing had been known like it since the days of David Stoner. Irreligious men were afraid to hear him. It may be said that his evangelistic work at this time reached its high-water mark, 'multitudes being added to the Lord.' Steady advance is recorded in the returns of church-membership—1,279, 1,350, 1,541—an increase of one hundred and ninety-one in the three years. At Birstall

was begun that friendship with J. Clapham Greaves which led to long comradeship in the work of spreading scriptural holiness.

#### MEMORIES OF BATLEY

We are happily able to quote the words of Mr. J. H. Ward, who remembers his Batley ministry, and furnishes a dialogue which took place one Sunday evening, when a mother asked her son :

‘ John, are you going to chapel to-night ? ’

‘ Who is preaching, mother ? ’

‘ Mr. Brash.’

‘ I think I shall go to church. I cannot stand Mr. Brash, he allus aims at t’ middle wicket.’

‘ At the time,’ continues Mr. Ward, ‘ he was in this circuit we had a remarkable quintette of ministers. The Rev. Martin Jubb was super. at Birstall, the Rev. John Brash second man at Batley, John H. Grubb third at Gomersal, Charles Dawe fourth at Westgate Hill, and Henry Bone fifth at Birstall—all very different men but all good. I have often longed for the same power to be present in our services. Then we had conversions frequently on a Sunday evening, and could get the bandroom nearly full for a Saturday evening band meeting. I always look back to John Brash as the most saintly man it has been my privilege to know—one who not only preached entire sanctification but who lived it day by day, and I believe this will be borne out by 100 per cent. of the people who knew him, if you could find them.

‘ His last visit to Batley was in 1905, and his sermons and conversation were such as to make you feel that he lived very near the Master.

‘ I was only a lad in my early teens then, and did not come into official contact with Mr. B., but as a lad I shall never forget the impression that he made on me.’

#### LATER MINISTRIES

We can only rapidly glance at his work in later spheres—Manchester (Cheetham Hill), where he was chosen as successor to Charles Garrett; Halifax, whence the state of Mrs. Brash’s health necessitated his removal after two years’ service, leaving an increase of 156 members; then Reading in 1877. Here he gained great influence with the working men in Huntley & Palmer’s Works. In 1880 he was again in Manchester (Gravel Lane); thence as successor to Mark Guy Pearse at Clifton, Bristol; three successful years at Blackheath followed; next he was appointed for the third time to Manchester, where, after two years at Longsight, his active ministry terminated, and he removed to Liverpool as supernumerary, residing in Wavertree with his much loved brother and sister until he died.

But his successful ministry, though changed, was by no means ended. He accepted a position in the Liverpool Mission, then under the superintendence of its founder, Charles Garrett, preaching and doing pastoral work in happy association with that genial philanthropist. With the mission he was associated for eighteen years, and it was during that time that he developed his great and winsome power as a speaker at conventions, first among his own people at the Southport annual gathering, and later in connexion with the Keswick Committee. Conventions, which were the outgrowth of each of these movements,

were held all over Great Britain and Ireland, and at these he became one of the most successful speakers.

A friend sends this memory of his conversation after one of these meetings : ‘ Mr. Brash was one of the speakers at a Convention held in Leicester for the “ deepening of the Spiritual Life.” Over the supper-table we were discussing the many terms used by the speakers to describe the Higher Life, and some of us were not a little perplexed.

‘ Entire Sanctification, Scriptural Holiness, and Full Salvation seemed something beyond our reach, till Mr. Brash said, “ Oh yes, we call it by many names, but all we need is *to get a little bit nearer Jesus.*” And even as he spoke we felt the drawing power of Jesus, and the weakest felt this nearness possible.’

As we shall see, his period of active service was followed by two years of seclusion and suffering, during which he fulfilled yet another and perhaps not less fruitful ministry, till the hour came when the faithful servant went as a tired child, to rest.



## CHAPTER II

### EARLY DAYS, CONVERSION, CONSECRATION, AND CHRISTIAN SERVICE

A Village Upbringing—His Conversion—The Way of Holiness—  
The Beginnings of Ministry.

THE question arises, How did this man, whose health almost throughout his career was delicate, and who endured at times the severest physical sufferings, work so strenuously and variously until he reached over fourscore years? It was largely due to a childhood and youth of wholesome village life, not without hard work when he was old enough to undertake it. The following letter gives some glimpses of those early days :

‘ What you say about the potatoes reminds me of my boyish days. I have dug and manured many a large garden-bed, and set many stones of potatoes, hoed them when the time came, and got them up for dinner as they were wanted for ourselves or the pigs. Sowed, and in due time transplanted, turnips, cabbages, and brocoli without end. Trimmed and weeded a really pretty old-fashioned flower garden with box borders. Plucked many a basket-full of plums and apples and pears from the trees, to say nothing of gooseberries and black currants, and sold them by retail at the cross on market days. For years milked at least one, usually two, sometimes three cows night and morning. Churned many and



many a pound of butter in the old long up-and-down churns. Cleaned out the cow-house, sliced turnips for the cattle—no machines in those days—foddered them in winter time. When I say that all this and twenty things besides was before I was fifteen it will help you to understand how little schooling I had—none, except during two short winters, after I was eleven.

‘I did not dislike spade-work, though I was often very stiff and tired, but it was so much a matter of business and necessity that I have never since looked upon it as a recreation. I was taught by practised men, and to this day, sometimes when I see a man handling a spade, I feel disposed to lay down my stick and take his spade and teach him a lesson. Perhaps I owe my long life to the open-air work of those days.’

Thus passed youth into young manhood. From the village he entered an office as a clerk—not a happy change to him. ‘Preventing grace,’ as the Puritans called it, was given; he became secretary to the Sunday school, and meanwhile God was preparing him for the decisive change of mind and will by which he was fairly enlisted in the army of Christ’s faithful soldiers. His own account of his entrance upon the new life is most interesting :

#### HIS CONVERSION

‘I don’t know,’ he says, ‘how otherwise to account for my own conversion. Will you count it strange if I say that up to my decision for Christ, when I was twenty-one, I never in my life heard a sermon which touched my conscience or my heart ?

I liked to hear revival and rousing sermons, but they never came near me. I met for a time in my father's class, and I suppose I had some sort of boy's religion and a tender conscience. But there was no peace, and I was glad to break away from it all.

'The resolve to belong to God just grew up in me without any visible or conscious impulse.'

This from another letter :

'All the good impressions I ever received came through reading. When I was about nine some one gave me a copy of Baxter's *Call*, which I read through with great interest and earnestness ; then Alleine's *Alarm*. Then I got hold of a copy of Doddridge's *Rise and Progress*, and not only read it through, but prayed all its prayers upon my knees. Then, when I was about ten, Squire Brooke came to the village, and a number of lads, myself amongst them, went like a flock of sheep into the vestry. The others were soon made happy, but I went mourning for some days. One night during a noisy prayer-meeting a big lad told me it was my duty to stand up and say I was saved. I did as I was told, but it was not true. I went to class, prayed in prayer-meetings, but it was weary bondage until, in my seventeenth year, I ran away from it all. I think it was on that account more than any other that I buried myself out of the sight and hearing of every one who knew me with the intention that it should be for life.

'When I was in my twenty-first year I dreamt that I had to die in a fortnight. The news did not give me any fear, but I said, "What a fool I have been ! Here is the end of my life, and I have not even begun to serve the purpose for which God

gave it me." Six weeks afterwards I suddenly remembered this dream with all I thought and felt, the result being that on the spot I resolved to be a Christian. I began to put myself through the approved process of repentance and faith. But that is a long story of darkness and conflict.

'All the way through introspection has been my snare. The story of my battles with mysticism would be tedious. I am thankful that now in my old age by the Spirit of God, my faith is that of an unquestioning child. What trouble God takes with us!'

What follows gives his account of the way in which he was brought into satisfying assurance of personal salvation during some services conducted by Mr. Isaac Marsden of Doncaster, in the year 1852 :

' . . . I had been brought to decision for Christ a few months previously, but, after a short period of peace, had relapsed into a condition of distracting doubt and misery ; I therefore looked forward to his coming with more than curiosity, for I cherished a trembling hope that during his visit I might find rest to my soul. The first impression was unfavourable and very discouraging ; I found him to be one of those men towards whom it is impossible to be indifferent, but who must be either loved or hated ; and my feeling, shared I believe by others, was one of strong dislike. His sermon on " pulling them out of the fire," though delivered with great earnestness, touched no one. The people were not ready for it. But after the close of the prayer-meeting, which had not been successful, he sat on a pew-top and told us in quiet tones of his own

conversion, and of the way in which he found peace with God. Then he proceeded, with almost womanly tenderness, to meet the difficulties of perplexed and troubled souls, showing with great clearness the simplicity of the faith by which we are saved. The reaction from the feeling that had prevailed during the service was marvellous. The power of the Divine Spirit came down upon the little company that had lingered behind, melting away all the hardness, and at least one of the number was filled with joy and peace in believing. I could have thrown myself into his arms, asking his forgiveness for my harsh judgement of him. The influence of that address has never left me, and the remembrance of it is inseparably associated with my thoughts of Isaac Marsden.'

But there were other influences. Some years previously, in connexion with the movement in Scotland which led to the formation of the Evangelical Union, four ministers being expelled from the Free Kirk because of their views on regeneration, John Kirk, one of the four, published a small book, entitled *The Way of Life Made Plain*. It was the study of this book which, in his own words, 'led me into the light after twelve months of sad, weary waiting for a deeper conviction of sin—a contrite heart—greater hatred to sin—penitential tears—the gift of faith—the witness of the Spirit—a sudden translation from darkness to light. John Kirk showed me that to seek for all this was not to honour the Holy Spirit, but to dishonour Jesus Christ, refusing to trust Him absolutely for salvation.'

It is evident that his conversion was the meeting-place of three streams of influence—the secret

preparatory work of the Divine Spirit, the words of the revival preacher acting upon his emotional nature, and John Kirk's treatise clearing his mind. 'Marvellous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty !'

#### THE WAY OF HOLINESS

It was not until his entrance upon his public ministry that the second decisive change in his spiritual life took place, a change which shaped the entire drift of his future career. He sought and found that grace of 'perfect love' of which for so many years he was an example and exponent. We are happily able to give his own testimony to his deeper experience. While the fair tree of a Christ-like character, beautiful alike in form, blossom, and fruitfulness stands 'plain for all folk to see,' that inward experience which is as the vital sap is only known through personal testimony. 'For who knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of man which is in him ?'

John Brash was amid the arduous work of his first circuit when, as he says, 'I began to seek the blessing of perfect love. One Sunday, having to preach in the country in the afternoon and evening, I spent the forenoon in prayer. While pleading with God for the blessing, my agony became so great that I resolved not to rise from my knees until I had obtained it. It was easy for me to yield up to God everything that I felt He required from me but *one*—and that was my *reputation*. In order to live a life of consecration to Him, it would be necessary for me to adopt a simple and unadorned style of preaching, to discard all subjects that would be pleasing

and interesting merely, and to aim solely and always at usefulness. The consequence of adopting such a style would be, as it then seemed to me, obscurity and hard work in discouraging spheres, and amongst small congregations. The struggle was severe, but all attempts at compromise, and all sophistical reasoning about seeking popularity as a stepping-stone to usefulness, failed to satisfy my conscience, and I at last made a full surrender of all my powers to God, that they might be employed for His glory alone. In the instant that I made the offering I felt that it was accepted, and that God had taken full possession of my heart. The experience was so distinct from anything I had previously felt that it was impossible to doubt the nature of the blessing I had received. Throughout the day there was an abiding consciousness of a *presence* which I knew to be that of Christ Himself. My feeling was one of reverent, subdued joy, arising from the knowledge that I was united to Him, and filled with His Spirit. Since that memorable Sunday the discussions I have read and heard on the subject of instantaneous and conscious sanctification from sin have had little interest for me. I *know* that the blessing *may be* received instantaneously ; though in some cases the transition from partial to entire sanctification may be imperceptible to the subject of it. In the afternoon, while preaching, I suddenly lost my recollection, my mind being for an instant a perfect blank. At any previous period of my preaching career such a circumstance would have greatly disconcerted me. But my soul was preserved in peace ; and after the congregation had sung a few lines, I continued my sermon with freedom and comfort, finding at the close



of the service that it had been a time of mutual power and blessing.'

This account was written in 1871.

#### THE BEGINNINGS OF MINISTRY

'How distinctly I remember my first penitents! Two of them. I had not sought them, and was non-plussed. For a time I wished they had not been there. I had been a couple of months in the ministry before I ever referred to hell from the pulpit. I had never once done it in all my career as a local preacher. But an old Manxman took me to task. He said, among other things: "I know the Manx people. If they are ever converted it's with *rough stuff*." My landlady also, a good old class-leader, told me that my sermons lacked *weight*. I took these counsels, with the result that I have named—the firstfruits of hundreds of men and women that God gave me before leaving the Island. I gave over 300 notes on trial in one quarter to people who, I suppose, would have called themselves my children in the gospel. I had a visit from one of them the other day. He is the Seamen's Missionary in Douglas. He told me that many are still living, and that they love to talk of the glorious times. So was I turned away, for good or ill, from the style into which my constitutional tendencies had led me. On my way to my first circuit I said within myself, "Well, I think I shall get on fairly well so long as things are quiet, but what *shall* I do if there should happen to be a revival?"'

'God only knows what it used to cost me to preach such sermons, so foreign to my temperament,



so far away from any motives that had ever influenced my own heart and life, so entirely in the face of earnest protests by my dear wife and personal friends. But I felt that necessity was laid upon me. Perhaps if I had had "a judicious superintendent," in whom I had confidence to show me a better way, it might have been otherwise. On the other hand is the fact that great numbers of men and women were turned to God. No doubt such preaching was better suited to the hearers of those days than it would be to present-day congregations. So, not without a sigh of regret as I remember it all, I leave the question alone.

'I got some relief during my last year in the Keighley Circuit from the books of Henry Dunn—forgotten now—*The Destiny of the Human Race*, *The Expositor*, &c.; and since then, though I have always given to the "Last Things," or tried to give to them, the place that Jesus Christ did in His teaching, the burden has been lighter.'

Yet those 'black sermons' were steeped in love.

'Again I have in the pulpit abandoned such a sermon because I did not find in myself the tenderness of spirit the subject needed, and fallen back upon a theme more cheerful. I remember that when preaching in the large Keighley Chapel on "The wicked shall be turned into hell," the darkest sermon I ever delivered, the people were in tears, and there were pathetic responses from all over the place. But all that belongs to an age dead and never to be resurrected. There is not the least good in all the mourning I hear from old men over the change. We have to reach men as they are, and learn how to do it.'

To these paragraphs a note may be added written in the retrospect of his lengthened career as a preacher:

‘ I preach a milder gospel than in older time, but I cannot leave the old lines. Never did I see and feel Christ to be so much in His fitness to meet all human need, and never was He so prominent in all I say to saints and sinners. He furnishes a theme, or should I say He is Himself a theme, on which one can always speak with confidence, and with the wooing note.’

## CHAPTER III

### SCRIPTURAL HOLINESS

New Testament Teaching and Wesley's—Holiness and The Will—  
'Southport' and 'Keswick' Teaching—Points of Agreement—Justification and Sanctification—Holiness Imperative—A Restatement of the Doctrine—The Letter and the Spirit—A Friendly Discussion—Is Holiness a Universal Obligation?—Jesus Christ the 'All in All'—A Direct Appeal.

That I Thy mercy may proclaim,  
That all mankind Thy truth may see,  
Hallow Thy great and glorious Name,  
And perfect holiness in me.

—*Charles Wesley.*

IN the very earliest letter Paul wrote to those who were the firstfruits of his apostleship, he prayed, 'And the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He that calleth you who will also do it.' (1 Thess. v. 23, 24.)

In the year 1771, John Wesley, then an aged man, wrote, 'Preach full salvation, receivable now by faith. This is the word that God will always bless, and which the devil peculiarly hates.' 'Entire sanctification is neither more nor less than pure love, love expelling sin and governing both the heart and life of a child of God.'

On his dying bed, 'in age and feebleness extreme,' John Brash wrote to his friend :

‘ It is in union by faith with Christ the crucified, risen, living, present Saviour, that we have full salvation. In all holiness conventions this should be the central theme. It leaves room for everything else that needs to be said on full submission, entire devotion, obedience, and the baptism of the Holy Ghost. It unifies everything.’

Since this became the chief theme of John Brash’s later ministry, his well-considered statements concerning it have peculiar value.

#### HOLINESS AND THE WILL

‘ We are sanctified in the truth ! The grace is wrought in us through some aspect of the truth, or some special revelation of Christ made to us through the truth. I agree with you that the great question is that of *the will*. But I should add some qualification. God is pleased to present to us in His Word, and through His well-beloved Son, powerful reasons why we should “ with a glad heart and free ” yield our wills to Him. And while it is ours to tell a Christian that his full salvation is largely a question of his will, it is our *special work*, as divine messengers, to present those reasons as forcibly as we know how, and by argument, invitation, warning, expostulation, persuasion and exhibition of Christ, *win* His people to the cheerful surrender for which He waits. It is not when men are thinking about their wills that they are saved ; but when, forgetting all about themselves, their wills included, they see God in Christ. “ I will because I will ” does not carry a man far, nor is a crushed will acceptable to God. There may be underlying rebellion—not active, but passive and

sullen. The great thing is, as H. P. Hughes used to say, "to get a verdict for Jesus Christ."'

'SOUTHPORT' AND 'KESWICK' TEACHING

'Like you, I do not believe in the non-eradication theory, but I believe as little in the eradication theory. Not only is the phrase unscriptural, but the figure is one that has no application to the case, and no correspondence to anything the Spirit does in a human heart. I am glad to find that the Pentecostal Leaguer is as clear on this point as F. B. Meyer himself, declaring that nowhere in the Scriptures do we find "the principle of sin," or the "root of sin." And this is good: "It must be obvious that any doctrine which requires for its exposition the use of phraseology and expressions neither found in, nor warranted by the Word of God, stands *ipso facto* self-condemned."

"Eradication," the word is like "perfection"—it takes a man half his time to explain what it is not, with this disadvantage, that he cannot establish his position by a reference to the Bible, as in the case of "perfection." In spite of all we can do the word leads to misconception. Here is M—— saying that if sin were eradicated we should be "put into such a condition that there shall be nothing left to respond to temptation." I have no doubt he honestly believes that to be the teaching of the eradication people. I fear it *was* what G. C—— meant, and those troublesome Maidstone people of olden time. Is it not best to repudiate a word which leads to so much misapprehension, especially seeing it is non-scriptural?'

## POINTS OF AGREEMENT

‘There can be no agreement so long as there are Arminians and Calvinists. Make us all Arminians or all Calvinists, and there will be a gleam of hope. How can we agree with men who make that great distinction (I see you have marked the passage in the Pentecostal League pamphlet) between the “standing” and the “state?”’

‘Personally I know exactly how far I agree with the Keswick school. The common ground, with a little alteration of phraseology, is this :

‘(1) We shall always be exposed to temptation—through every avenue of our nature ; (2) We may have a perfect and constant victory over temptation in all its forms ; (3) That victory is ours so long as we “abide in Christ” (with all that short phrase means). What C—— calls, scripturally I think, innocent appetites, the Keswickians call sinful *tendencies* yet remaining in the nature. The latter teach that we may have perfect victory. Dr. C—— pleads for no more so far as the practical Christian life is concerned. Each school is exposed to error, and occasionally falls into it. The former, that of limiting the Holy One of Israel, and His unifying work in our hearts ; the latter, that of calling everything an infirmity, which is not—as Benjamin Hellier says, “A voluntary transgression of known law,” or as the Pentecostal Leaguer says “Which has not the consent of the will.” But—a man injures me and I lose my temper ; or I am blamed or condemned by Christian people for conduct which I believe to be right, and yield to a spirit of vexation and am fretted. This wrong temper has not the

consent of my will; I fight against it and pray against it. Is it, therefore, not sin?

‘I believe further, that a man filled with the Spirit may *fall short of the glory of God*, though J. C. Greaves thinks I am wrong, and Reader Harris and Price Hughes ridicule such a theory. To me it would be simply shocking to hear a man, however holy, say at the close of a day, that he had that day fulfilled all the possibilities of the Christian life.’

#### JUSTIFICATION AND SANCTIFICATION

‘Men like M—— and H—— trouble me by putting justification so low. In itself it is of course purely relative work, but they speak as if a man might be justified without any inward change whatever. Their favourite mode of putting the case is that when a man is justified he is saved from the *penalty* of sin (I wonder they never say *guilt*), and that when he enters into the fullness of the blessing he is saved from its *power*—you scarcely ever hear them say *defilement*. I told the people at Brighton that if they were in the condition I had described (I quite forget what the condition was) it was time to ask themselves whether they were Christians at all. H—— followed me, and before beginning his address proper, reminded them that their *standing* might be right even though they lacked—what I had been speaking about. He did not put it in that bald form, but every one knew what he meant.

‘I rather wonder at all this, seeing the fundamental creed of Calvinism is that regeneration precedes not justification only, but faith. Drummond teaches it in his *Natural Law in the Spiritual World*.’



### HOLINESS IMPERATIVE

‘ What you say about the sin attaching to a reserve in the consecration reminds me of the truth on which Benjamin Hellier used to insist, that in the New Testament the only Christian life *allowable* is that of entire sanctification. For those who are stopping short of this there are exhortations, warnings, expostulations, invitations, prayers; but the life there presented to every believer is one of a surrendered will, an obedient heart, a victorious Spirit-filled life in union with Christ, bringing salvation from sin, and leading to steady growth, through increasing knowledge and manifold temptations. This is the true answer to those who ask where the *New Testament* speaks of a second blessing. Salvation is *one* blessing, which many Christians, through their own fault or that of their teachers are not receiving in its completeness. ’

### A RESTATEMENT OF THE DOCTRINE

‘ So C—— wants a restatement of the doctrine of Christian perfection. How often have we heard this cry! How many a man has tried to meet it! How soon each restatement has been forgotten! It is not possible to have a restatement that will be accepted by more than a section of even evangelical Christians. The odd thing is that C—— charges Wesley with the mistake of calling some mere infirmities sins. It appears to me that the trend of theological thought is in the other direction. The general feeling—and I don’t disagree with it—is that Wesley, in order to maintain his doctrine of perfection,

was rather too ready to call some sins infirmities. It appears to me that C—— is craving for an angular mechanical definition that may satisfy men of logical mind, but that will not be in agreement with the largeness and breadth of the New Testament, or with the facts of the spiritual life. On the other hand, Dr. ——'s teaching is nothing less than frightful. How dishonouring to the Lord Jesus Christ the experience of S—— and the other men as an example of all that He can do for His faithful disciples! Their talk about themselves is, I suppose, coloured by their creed. They luxuriate in a sense of sin, believing this to be a sign of grace.'

. . . . .

'Dr. D——'s sermon is good. The reading of it was useful to me. He has not quite got over his prejudice against the men of our school, but there are fewer of the old words of caution that tended to frighten folk away from holiness rather than attract them to it. A—— wants a good book on the subject. No book that the best man could write would satisfy. One in harmony with the Modern Mind might please a few. But the earnest Christians in our own and other evangelical Churches, who are the only people that trouble much about holiness, haven't got the Modern Mind, whatever preachers who live in their libraries may think. The standpoint of Thomas Collins in Coley's *Life* is still that which, more than any other, suits our own people. Charles Wesley's hymns are not obsolete.

. . . . .

'To myself, I never seem to put the subject in the old Methodist way, or in T—— C——'s way.

And yet, I have been so steeped in Methodism from my childhood that there must be—however unconsciously—a marked strain of the old in my thoughts and speech. A D. C—— who sticks uncompromisingly to the old method, and fights for it, told me in Southampton that I was “very modern.” I think he meant that I was not sufficiently definite. My growing feeling is that each man, who has a real call from God, has a message given to him that he is bound to deliver. No doubt his temperament and other things contribute to the moulding of the message, but all that is part of the providential arrangement.

‘Well, may we be so filled with the Spirit that God Himself can speak by us and through us to sinners and saints!’

#### THE LETTER AND THE SPIRIT

‘When looking through some American papers for matter to fill a gap in *The King’s Highway*, my spirit revolted at their mechanical method of presenting the doctrine of holiness. I found article after article, each as *sound* as it could be, but very far away from anything I should like to say. Twenty years ago I should have accepted them, but now the one central thought to me is living union with the living Saviour—perfect loyalty to Him in everything, a sense of absolute dependence upon Him, and a hearty believing reception of Him into my heart in the fullness of His Spirit. M—— said to me at Southport, “I am trying more and more to see Christ as the apostles saw Him.” And I feel very much like that.’

## A FRIENDLY DISCUSSION

‘ Mr. C——, the clergyman, was against my teaching. He is one of a sort not very common in these days—a High Calvinist who pushes the doctrine of human inability to such an extreme as to overshadow that of responsibility. My first address was on “ Having therefore these promises,” &c. At its close he said to me, “ Do you really believe that we *can* cleanse ourselves ? ” I asked him what he made of the Apostolic exhortation. He had no reply, except that he did not believe it possible. After the last meeting he challenged me in the presence of many of his own people who gathered round us. He wanted to know how a Christian could *will* to be a better man, and conquer temptation. I told him that I believed in man’s inability as thoroughly as he did, but I believed the Holy Spirit was always first with us, and that what God commanded to be done *could* be done. I said that on his showing the exhortation of our Lord to the church at Ephesus was mockery. He exhorted them to do the impossible. He had no reply, but fell back on his position : Man is regenerated independently of his own will, and being regenerated, is sure of heaven at last, and what more is there to be said ? The one thing is to let Christ dwell in our hearts by faith. I asked him if there were not sometimes hindrances to this which God required His people to put away. He would not admit it. I asked him further if he did not think the doctrine underlying all the Epistles, including those to the seven churches, was that Christian believers were accountable to God for the feebleness or strength of their spiritual life. He

*Will*

would not admit this. . . . He was quite kind and cordial, and we parted excellent friends. His presence in a meeting would not interfere in the least with my freedom or comfort.

‘ I thought you would be interested to know what sort of men there are among Church of England Evangelicals. One of his troubles is that the “ Keswickers ” are his best workers in the mission hall, &c., and that he is dependent upon them. He said as much to me. They say that he is thoroughly evangelical, but does not lead them on.’

#### IS HOLINESS A UNIVERSAL OBLIGATION ?

‘ You ask, “ *Is there* a deeper spiritual life not required of all ? ” I should say decidedly, “ No.” The life may manifest itself in very different forms according to temperament, early training, and circumstances. And there will always be, or ought always to be, a difference corresponding to the length of time the life has been lived. There should be maturity corresponding to length of years. But, essentially the life is the same, and—in reply to your question, if I rightly understand it—the conditions are the same, obedience to the will of God in everything, so far as His will is made plain to us, and union with Christ through faith in Him. I don’t at all think it is the will of God that some men should live nearer to Him than others. No doubt early training has much to do with conduct. Mr. Gladstone could go to a ball-room or a theatre in the fear of God. I couldn’t. Then what varieties of habit in relation to Sabbath-keeping ! Many of my brethren would consider me very narrow, and yet they

do things in other ways that I could not. Feeling more and more deeply as life advances that love to God and man is *the* essential thing, I have an increasing indisposition to judge men in respect of habits that are not inconsistent with love. One meets with men who were born without the faintest strain of the mystic temperament, and to whom it is incomprehensible ; and men of your sort and mine have to take this into the account in judging them and to acknowledge the good that is in them. For the good *is* there.'

#### JESUS CHRIST THE 'ALL IN ALL'

'I am made to feel that my ground has shifted somewhat since the early days. I still believe in "a second blessing," a "second work of grace," but my tendency is to bring Christian believers into the immediate presence of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself ; that, recognizing that they are not their own, but bought with a price, they may cheerfully yield their inmost, uttermost selves to Him, trusting Him then and there to receive them and fill them with His Spirit, saving them from all sin now and always, on the condition that they abide in Him by obedient faith. It is important to know what is wrought in me. It is more important to know what Christ is to me. Half a dozen different men may be the subjects of the same work of grace, but each will describe it differently from the rest according to the theological or psychological school to which he may happen to belong. Dr. Mahan used to express his willingness to insert in *Divine Life* "a well-considered testimony"; meaning thereby, evidently, that the



inward experience or the description of it must be conformable to his dogmatic teaching. How strongly and constantly St. Paul insists upon all being "in Christ." "Ye are complete *in Him*."

This was written in 1910, not many months before his removal to where he sees the face of Him he loved.

#### A DIRECT APPEAL

This chapter may fitly close with an appeal from a small book he wrote in 1872, one of a series by various writers on Scriptural Holiness. After dwelling on the need for an absolute consecration to God, he proceeds to enforce the necessity of simple faith in order to the realization of holiness.

' You must believe that the Lord does *now* accept the offering which you present to Him. It is not enough to believe that He *will* receive you and then to *wait* for the *token* of acceptance. If you do this you will surely wait in vain. Do you not see that this hesitancy to believe that Christ does *now* accept you dishonours Him, inasmuch as it is an imputation upon His love? You are expressly taught that "He gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity." What is the history of your spiritual life since your sins were forgiven, but a history of a controversy between Christ and yourself? He, on the one hand, has been seeking, by His word, His ministers, His secret influences, His providences, to induce you to receive Him as a full Saviour. You, on the other hand, have, in a greater or less degree, steadily and constantly resisted His will. Every good desire you have received, every



feeling of dissatisfaction with your spiritual state, every wish that you were holier, every disappointed hope, and every withered joy, has been the voice of Christ calling you to a closer fellowship with Himself, inviting you to seek and find your paradise in Him alone. And having at last, after so long a conflict, owned Him conqueror, and yielded to His will, and offered yourself to Him, can you doubt whether He *now* receives you? You cannot, you may not doubt. To doubt is to sin against the light He has given you. It is your duty even now to reckon yourself dead indeed unto sin and alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.'

## CHAPTER IV

### HIS CONTEMPORARIES AND SOME OTHERS

Henry Martyn—Harriet Martineau—Tennyson—George Eliot—  
F. D. Maurice—John Hessel—John Morley and James  
Martineau—Dora Greenwell—Cardinal Manning and James  
Hinton—H. E. Manning—H. Price Hughes—Reader  
Harris—Alexander Maclaren—Andrew Murray.

THE judgements of so sane an observer upon the notable men and women of his day are worth reporting. Dwelling in the secret place of the Most High, John Brash was neither devotee nor recluse, but one whose interest in the men and movements of the hour never slackened. A chapter on England's recent political history might almost be compiled from his letters. That is unnecessary, but his notes on public men and writers will be read with interest.

### HENRY MARTYN

' I am reading Henry Martyn's *Life* by Dr. George Smith, three or four times the length of the old life by Sargent, telling all the story of his love for Lydia Grenfell—full of pathos. But they were both morbidly introspective and sensitive—each defeating the other's purpose, and more or less spoiling the other's life. Everything is laid bare by copious extracts from the two diaries. It is hard to get at



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JOHN BRASH, 1874.



the truth about Martyn from his own journal, so full of unhappy self-accusation, but he seems to have been a man of hasty spirit, impatient of contradiction, full of zeal for his Divine Master, speaking in season and out of season—often out of season. While reading, I have again and again said to myself, “If he had only known what Jesus Christ could have done for him!” He would not then have worn himself out in efforts, often unsuccessful, to stamp down his sinful passions. And I think his ministry would have been more successful. But one feels ashamed in the presence of such a man.

‘Let me conclude with a sentence from his Diary when on shipboard.

‘I am born for God only. Christ is nearer to me than father, or mother, or sister—a near relation, a more affectionate friend; and I rejoice to follow Him and to love Him. Blessed Jesus! Thou art all I want—a forerunner to me in all I shall ever go through, as a Christian, a minister, or a missionary.’

#### HARRIET MARTINEAU

‘Harriet Martineau is presented in a more attractive light than in her *Autobiography*, which I read many years ago. She struck me then as a very clever, but very confident, self-conceited woman. There was anything but a pleasant flavour in all she said about Atkinson. I thought him a mere charlatan, but Mrs. Fenwick Miller speaks very respectfully of him. Christ is never so precious to me as when I read atheistic books, or atheistic letters such as these in Harriet Martineau’s Life. It is impossible for me to believe that for eyesight

and hearing and all the other senses, and for the thirst for knowledge, there are correspondences in the natural world, and that there is nothing anywhere to meet the highest aspirations of our nature, that the best part of us must be starved to death by disuse. And how fully our longing is met in Jesus Christ! I don't wonder that H. P. Hughes should so often cry, "Thou, O Christ, art all I want." There is much against us in our contention with infidels, but it is always a comfort to me that we have in our favour this universal soul-hunger.'

## TENNYSON

'Tennyson had an aunt who was an ultra-Calvinist, and who "would weep for hours because God was so infinitely good. Has He not damned most of my friends? But *me, me* He has picked out for eternal salvation; *me*, who am no better than my neighbours." One day she said to her nephew, "Alfred, Alfred, when I look at you I think of the words of Holy Scripture, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire."

'Tennyson was very fond of his mother, who in her widowhood was an earnest Cheltenham evangelical who read only her Bible and Dr. Cumming's works. Tennyson was a beautiful reader, and would read to her for hours the books she liked. If she began to cry he would say, "Dam your eyes, mother, dam your eyes," and she would smile at him through her tears, half reproachfully and half proud of him. Tennyson seemed to be nearly always occupied with the great themes so prominent in "In Memoriam," but he was free with

his tongue. If people began, as he thought, to overpraise his work, he would say, "Don't talk d——d nonsense."

'Westley, the optician, said that he and Sir Charles Napier were the two nearest sighted men in England. Without spectacles he was practically blind. He speaks of an interview with the Queen in which he could hear her beautifully modulated voice, but could not see her.'

Seeing

### GEORGE ELIOT

'*Middlemarch* is the only one of George Eliot's novels that I have never read. It came in my way once, but seemed to be a long story and I was busy. I never read her books without benefit, especially the earlier ones. It was quite clear to me, when I read her *Life* by Mr. Cross, that she was never really converted. She got among the wrong sort of Christians, and was a rather pragmatist, narrow-minded Calvinist. Conversion would have saved her. As it was, the Calvinism led to violent reaction. But to the end she saw and taught, like Mr. John Morley, that the true life is only reached through the abnegation of self. It was this that made *Thomas à Kempis* precious to her all her days. It is not easy to judge persons like her. Have you observed this peculiarity in her stories, showing the perfection of her writing? You cannot afford to skip or forget a single paragraph. If you do you are sure, before reaching the end, to come to something you do not quite understand, compelling you to turn back, or to be content with an imperfect apprehension of her meaning.'

Staple



F. D. MAURICE

‘Thanks for Maurice’s little book.<sup>1</sup> It is one of a sort that nowadays scarcely any one reads, and that find their way to the cheap lots on bookstalls; and yet I had not spent ten minutes in it this morning, while breakfasting in bed, before the author’s deep insight made me feel how poor is the bulk of Christian literature now teeming from the press, in comparison with it. His volumes on the Patriarchs, Judges, and Kings were of great use to me thirty or forty years ago. He was one of the writers against whom young men were warned when I entered the ministry, and yet he spent many hours a day, sometimes whole nights, in prayer. In some respects that is no guarantee against destructive error, for don’t Roman Catholic ascetics do the same? Kingsley, his most devoted disciple, comes a long way behind him, though he did much to popularize the teaching, which, on its mystical side, has always had some fascination for me. The only out-and-out disciple of the Broad Church school, including its Christian Socialism, that I know is Dean Stubbs [now Bishop of Carlisle], who was vicar of Waver-tree prior to his preferment. He read Maurice, talked Maurice, preached Maurice, lectured on Maurice. But somehow the mystical element seemed to be wanting.’

JOHN HESSEL

‘When I was twenty-one, just after my conversion, I read Priestley’s *Life of John Hessel*, and was

<sup>1</sup> On the Lord’s Prayer.

deeply impressed. It would hardly be wrong to say that the good effect, so far as it went, was permanent. A few years ago I saw a second-hand copy on a bookstall, bought it, and forgot all about it. Last Monday morning, on looking again at my shelves, I took it down and spent the day in it, skipping the author's moralizing. The book was not to me what it had first been, but I was surprised at the extent to which it transported me to the old position, and how vividly it recalled the old hopes and resolves, followed alas! by over half a century of more or less failure. One feels more and yet more deeply, as the years go by, the need of the atonement and mediation of the Great High-Priest. "I can see nothing that will bear looking at." If Wesley had to say that, how much more such an one as I!

## JOHN MORLEY AND JAMES MARTINEAU

'A while ago I wondered whether I was not reading more fiction than was good for me, and got John Morley's *Burke*, finding it a very good and interesting book. With the exception of *Diderot*, I think I have now read all Morley's biographies—*Voltaire*, *Rousseau* (2 vols.), *Cobden*, *Burke*, much the smallest. He has a good style and is an "improving" writer, leading you out into broad views of men and things, and is very candid as well as tolerant. He does not conceal his attitude towards Christianity. While setting it very high as a system of ethics, and acknowledging the world's indebtedness to it for all that it has done to develop the sentiment of "compassion," he does not consider it the highest.

But there are much worse things in many books by professedly Christian men than in his.

‘ I have now got hold of James Martineau’s *Life*, a rather large book which I dare say I shall not read through, but which, almost wherever I open it, affords me glimpses of schools of thought in which I have never been a student and am not likely to be. But it is sometimes well to know a little about things one does not understand.’

DORA GREENWELL, CARDINAL MANNING, AND OTHERS

‘ Thanks for the appropriate lines you quote from Dora Greenwell. I have read the *Memoir*, but do not fully understand her. The story of her life is rather slender. From the point in her history where she said, “ When I kneel down to pray I am a Protestant with Christ only between me and God, and between me and Christ, faith—individual faith,” to that where she went to a priest for Absolution, she had travelled far, but Mr. Dorling tells us very little about the stages of the road. I should think she was more Catholic than Papist, like Newman. Manning said, “ The three greatest evils in the Church to-day are French devotional books, theatrical music, and pulpit oratory ; and the last is the worst.” Judging from his expressions at other times I infer that by French devotional books he meant the writings of Madame Guyon, Fénelon, and others of their school, showing a way to God without the intervention—or with only occasional intervention—of priests and sacraments. Manning himself spent much time in prayer, waiting long and patiently for the Holy Spirit’s guidance in times of perplexity, but

he always prayed in his little chapel, kneeling before the Blessed Sacrament.

‘Miss Greenwell’s letters, while defective as an exposition of her creed, are full of good thoughts.’

JAMES HINTON

‘By the way, I have seen a complaint against James Hinton that in his *Mystery of Pain* he deals only with human suffering. I think he might have replied that it was the only subject on which he set himself to deal.

‘But if I sympathize with a wounded dog as it cries out in its pain, who will say that Christ does not? He must—more keenly than I can. When one seeks to realize all the animal suffering on this round earth, the thought is overwhelming. “The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain,” and Christ groans with it. Happy day when redemption comes, bringing in the new heaven and the new earth. “He that believeth” can wait. A thousand years with God is as one day. I should have liked to know a little more about Dora Greenwell’s attitude towards these questions.

‘Then, with respect to the mystery of suffering. If it were not for what her Clifton friend says about the “distracting contradictions” in her works, “the vague and useless cry of suffering,” “consuming the strength we are compelled to conserve for action,” I should have thought that she had found rest where I have found it, viz. in the fact that the Creator must be immeasurably the superior of His highest creation. The best thing in man is love. What then can it be but a feeble spark from

the infinite flame? Therefore "God is love." We may deny the being of a God, but if we believe in His existence we cannot deny that He is love. The next best thing in man, the fruit of love, is sympathy—"compassion" in the primary sense of the word. What is that but a faint reflection of what is found in God? If He is an omnipresent, omniscient Being, His sympathy with all suffering is continuous and perfect.

'Our God is God in Christ, and, as Coulson Kerna-han says, Christ is still a suffering Christ. It is not simply that He pities pain of every sort. He *suffers* it. In all our affliction He is afflicted. To complain then of suffering, my own or another's, is to assume that I am wiser and better than God. Why may we not be content to suffer with Him? It is not as some one (I think, James Hinton) has said, that there is any virtue in our sufferings. We are not redeemed *by* them but *in* them. But there is an intimacy in this subject to which I find myself unable to give expression.

What can we do, o'er whom the unbeholden  
Hangs in a night with which we cannot cope?  
What but look sunward, and with faces golden,  
Speak to each other softly of a hope?

H. E. MANNING

'I had spent the last two or three hours of the evening over the *Life of Manning*. I re-read the first volume, telling the story of his Anglican life in the early summer before the Conventions began, and began this second volume last week. Such a tale of jealousies, intrigues, and backstairs

tittle-tattle ! The English Catholics restive under their bishops, the bishops restive under the cardinals, archbishops sending messages behind his back to the Pope, Manning all the while in private correspondence with the Pope's confidential adviser. Manning greatly disliked the Jesuits, and denied them a footing in his own diocese except so far as they were there before his appointment. Chiefly, I think, because they were not amenable to him, but to their Father-General at Rome. For the same reason he had no love for the Monkish orders, Franciscan, Benedictine or other. He must be autocrat or nothing. He cleverly kept Newman in obscurity through a long course of years. He was speechless with mortification when the Duke of Norfolk, Earl of Ripon, and men of that class suggested that Newman should be made cardinal. Newman, very old man that he was, seems to have been overcome with gratitude for the distinction, exclaiming, " The cloud is lifted from me for ever." Think of all that he must have quietly suffered !

' The remarkable thing is that amid it all Manning prayed about everything, spending hours a day in seeking the guidance of the Holy Ghost. I think his feeling was that Anglo-Catholicism was " Gallican "—too free from the influence of the Vatican, and that his mission was to bring it into subjection, preparatory to the conversion of the kingdom, for which devout Catholics are praying every day.'

HUGH PRICE HUGHES

' I cannot get over the great loss we have suffered. To some it will seem exaggeration, but I do not



think Methodism has, ever since the death of Wesley, lost a man whose removal has left such a blank. Dr. Bunting lived to be old, and had gradually retired from everything. Dr. Punshon was a brilliant orator, but all that had to be done was to fill his place at the Mission House—not a difficult thing.

‘How generous all the papers are! Evidently there was great respect for him even among his opponents. He always struck me as a man of great intellectual dexterity, giving him remarkable power in debate, but I was never able to put him in the first rank as a preacher. There is this to be said, however, that where any of our great preachers won one soul for Christ he won at least twenty, perhaps fifty. And is not that the true test of preaching?’

‘I have often wished for information as to the stability of his converts, for this reason: He once told me that he seldom—I think he said *never*—preached on sin as guiltiness needing pardon, but that he offered Christ to men as a Saviour from the power of sin, and the thralldom of evil habits. I told him I thought it was a defective statement of truth, but he could not agree. He considered that his method brought Christ as a living Saviour nearer to men than any other.

‘I told the people at Hutchinson Hall that H. P. H. died just as I should like to die. I said it quite simply and on the impulse of the moment, but was surprised to see that it made something of a sensation. But the fact remains that I can see nothing so desirable as to “cease at once to work and live.” I have so much confidence in my Saviour as to feel



quite sure that He does not come about us to take us at some disadvantage.'

## READER HARRIS

'I always stand up for Reader and Mrs. Harris when among my Keswick friends, some of whom—not by any means all of them—think he does harm. The League is a witness for a great truth, and the Christian world would be the poorer for its absence. What I rather shrink from is his very mechanical method of putting the doctrine—so different from what we find in the writings of Paul, James and John, and in the words of our Lord Himself. He was a mechanical engineer before he became a barrister. This is the secret of his success at the Parliamentary Bar. He is at home with water-works bills, gasworks bills, tramcar bills, &c. And his mode of stating the truth is characteristic of himself. "Fulfil these conditions, and there you are; turned out of the shop complete, and in good working order." When I heard him say that during all the eight years he was an agnostic he never sinned and never was tempted to sin, I felt that between his conception of sin and mine there was a great chasm. I thought that I should like to ask him whether during all that time he loved his neighbour as himself. Wesley is his master, but he lacks Wesley's balance, and goes far beyond him, teaching what is virtually sinlessness. I heard him say in Liverpool, "I don't teach sinless perfection, because sinless perfection is a state from which you cannot fall." Well, Adamic perfection comes considerably within that range. Still, as Dr. A. T. Pierson once

said to me, "we have much greater need to be afraid of imperfection than of perfection": and I have a personal liking for both of them and honour them for their faithfulness.

Rather singularly, ———, who is not a University man, was also a mechanical engineer. Webster told me this when I was remarking upon ———'s favourite method of defining holiness as the *right adjustment* of the nature through the surrender of the will. This way of putting the subject commends itself to me, but ———'s teaching—as with that of all the men of his school—is vitiated by his belief in the two natures. No doubt there is a place for us all. And we shall not, any of us, get far wrong if we are careful to exalt Christ, not in our teaching only, but in our habits of thought, and in our inmost hearts. "Therefore," says old Sibbes, "the ministers of the gospel should be much in laying open the riches of God in Christ. In unfolding Christ all other things will follow, as St Paul in Titus ii. 11, 12."'

ALEX. MACLAREN

' Have just finished Maclaren's *Life*, lent to me—a good, well-written book, not too long—just sufficient—a full-length portrait of the man—so far as it was possible to give a full-length spiritual portrait of one so reticent as he was. It is singular that there is no reference to Higher Criticism, or Modern Psychology, or any of these questions of which the reviews are so full. He just—all the way through—preached Jesus Christ and Him crucified, his last books being mainly enlarged sketches of

sermons preached at Southampton more than half a century previously. But the sight of him continuing hard at work until almost the end has filled me with utter shame and confusion over the remembrance of my own wasted life. How thankful I am that salvation is by grace—wholly grace and only grace. That is what I shall be when the end comes—a sinner saved by grace.’

## ANDREW MURRAY

‘Then Murray himself rose, a thin, wiry man, approaching seventy, with a long wrinkled face and thin hair on his head and cheeks, not grey, who speaks with considerable energy, but with his eyes shut a great part of the time. After telling how the tide of “Oxford” and “Brighton” and Moody’s mission reached Africa, observing that his first book, *Abide in Christ*, was written thirty years ago in Dutch for his own Boers simply, he gave us a straight, earnest talk on waiting before God for the fullness of the Spirit—before everything. It was good, consisting largely of exhortation. When he had finished, he said, “Let us pray,” and after very earnest supplication pronounced the Benediction. We then sang “Praise God from whom all blessings flow,” with the chorus, “And above the rest this note shall swell,” and separated. I am convinced that his address, which might have been disappointing to some Lancashire or Yorkshire audiences, was very congenial to the atmosphere of the place—*strenuousness*. They were a company of people intensely devoted to God and His work, and looking for a revival of religion all over the world.’

## CHAPTER V

### MODERNISM, THE NEW PSYCHOLOGY, AND THE ANCIENT VERITIES

Theology and a Unitarian Sermon—God and Prayer—  
The Psychology of William James—‘The Religion of a  
Mature Mind’—The Old and the New—Inspiration and  
Changing Beliefs—The Psychology of Religion—Chester-  
ton’s ‘Orthodoxy’—Modernism and His Own Experi-  
ence—Changes in our Conceptions of Christianity—Science  
and the Spiritual—Adapting Preaching to the Times—  
Theology in Transition.

JOHN BRASH was wont to say that when he was in the company of evangelical clergymen, such as he met in the Keswick gatherings, he felt himself a man of broad views; but when among his own brethren in the ministry, he seemed to be an old fogey. After a ministerial meeting at which one of the more ‘advanced’ brethren had read a paper dealing with Sir Oliver Lodge’s views, the reader came to him in undisguised astonishment that he knew so much about it. ‘I suppose,’ he wrote, ‘that these “advanced” brethren look upon men of my school and yours as old fossils, ignorant or careless, or both, of the movement in modern Christendom.’

#### THEOLOGY AND A UNITARIAN SERMON

‘In twenty ways I am broader than I used to be, but there is one respect in which I suppose I am

narrower. To me the tendency to repudiate, in whatever form, Jesus Christ as a Divine Redeemer is decadence, and will mean loss of spiritual power. The man who, to bring Christianity into harmony with modern thought, throws over the supernatural in the Gospels, and reduces Christ to a good man, gives himself and Christianity away.

‘But there is charm in a good deal of this new method of presenting Christianity to a man who will add to it his evangelical creed, because it emphasizes a side of the Christian life which the Calvinistic evangelicals of the last century half forgot. Two or three years ago I heard a sermon in the Unitarian Church, in Hope Street, by Dr. J. W. Whiton, of New York, on the immanence of God. To me it was a very interesting and useful sermon, but not to the congregation generally. The men pricked up their ears when he began, but when they scented the mysticism their attention was gone. They simply gave up listening. I could feel the collapse. The only people arrested were four or five ladies, belonging probably to one or more of the old devout Unitarian families of Liverpool. The reason why I was helped by the sermon, which was beautiful in style and remarkable for spiritual insight, was that the immanent God was to me God in *Christ*, who died for me, and rose again, and had become my living Saviour. But the preacher never once mentioned Christ. I may say that my impression of the men was that they had ceased to recognize anything beyond honest living.’

## GOD AND PRAYER

‘That reminds me of the stress which Mr. Coe, like Professor James, lays on the diversities of Christian experience. Most of his quotations appear to be from James. We all believe that there are differences—corresponding to differences of temperament—but what these men really mean is that experience is *entirely subjective*, and that nothing is owing to any influence outside or above the man himself. Mr. Coe says, with St. John, that God is love, but I think he would also say, with Mrs. Eddy, the Christian Scientist, that love is God. He speaks of God as our Father; but when you want to know what a man means by such language, you need to inquire what are his views on prayer. And Mr. Coe denies that there is any efficacy whatever in prayer beyond its reflex influence on the man that offers it. He thinks there may be something in telepathy, but does not express an opinion.

‘When I read this I thought of a book by Dr. Asa Mahan on Spiritualism. I read it some twenty or thirty years ago. It was exhibited for sale in the Bradlaugh and Besant bookshop in Fleet Street. Dr. Mahan denied that there was any evidence of communication with spirits, and maintained that all a medium could do was to read the thoughts of some person present in the circle. I think everybody now admits that there are hypnotic conditions in which mind may commune with mind without speech. But—this is the odd thing—the doctor thought that there was some medium, or element, or whatever else you may please to call it, in which this is done, and hazards a conjecture that it is in this



medium or element that God answers prayer, thus anticipating—though in another form—the speculations of the new mysticism, for one cannot call them more than speculations.’

#### THE PSYCHOLOGY OF WILLIAM JAMES

‘ You will find all you want in the way of testimony in W. James’ book. One or two of the ministers I know used it largely in their class-meetings. It is necessary however to be careful in selection. He includes some very morbid neurotic experiences, and expresses his thorough belief in every one of them. It was this that led me to suspect the tendencies of his book when others were praising it so highly. He believes in experience because he has nothing else left. His subsequent books show you this, especially that on Pragmatism—anything is true that leads you into the right relation to God and the universe. It is not necessary that Christ should have died and risen again. It is in the *belief* that He died, and the surrender to Him to which the belief leads, that the transforming power lies. In the *Hibbert Journal* I read a paragraph by Dr. Schmiedel, the writer of the article on Jesus Christ in the *Encyclopedia Biblica*—stating that if he became convinced that no such person as Jesus ever lived—he does not expect to be—but if he *were* so convinced, it would not *now* make the least difference to his spiritual life. This Modernism, as opposed to “intellectualism,” says, “First of all through the surrender of your personal will to the larger will (the world-will, that which you call God), then believe as much of the



gospel story and the miraculous as you are able. In time you may find yourself believing more than you now do, but all that is of secondary consequence." I was not surprised that in the Methodist Assembly meetings, Dr. Peake, himself a Higher Critic, and in some respects a Modern, expressed his "dismay" at what he called the "reckless way" in which some men were resting the evidence of Christianity on experience. He insisted upon Christian faith, including belief in the historic facts of the New Testament.

'I cannot believe, however, that extreme Modernism will become very prevalent. If that is all we have to offer, the common people—average people of every sort—will either let religion altogether alone, or become ritualists or Roman Catholics.'

#### 'THE RELIGION OF A MATURE MIND'

'I have read this book with a good deal of interest, but scarcely feel competent to criticize it. It would have had a great fascination for me thirty or forty years ago, when I was a good deal ensnared by mediaeval and French mysticism. But the book could not have been written at that time. The writer is a disciple of the new mysticism represented by such men as Maeterlinck, Professor James, and, I think, Sir Oliver Lodge.

'Man in his subliminal self is one with all humanity and one with God if you will, each teacher to give his own definition of God.

'It is independent of all historical beliefs, and all authority, and all theology, and rejects the miraculous. It may be lived by the Christian, the

Buddhist, the Mohammedan, the Agnostic. "What we need is not an infusion of something that ever was totally outside us, but a complete development of what is already within us." "Live a complete life." "There can be no higher destiny or duty for us than just to be our whole selves."

'The secret of Jesus was that He knew all this and taught it. Therein alone did He differ from other men. Though He was the most commanding figure in history, yet even He finds life in no individualism, but only by merging Himself into that ultimate community of life in which men share in the life of God and God shares in the life of men, and each man in the life of his fellows. He found life just as He tells us we may find it, by losing all the arbitrariness and egoism out of it.

'That is the utmost he has to say about Jesus. I have read attentively the chapter on "The Christ of Personal Experience." He writes very carefully, chooses his language with almost insidious skill so as not to seem to break with those who believe that Christ is divine, but all he means is that Christ is the great *ideal*, to be kept continually before us. We are to live in it until it transforms us and is realized in us.

' "Self-realization"—that is man's chief end. Another way of saying, "live in your subconscious self." It is a good feature of the book that all the way through it insists—seeing that God is love—that you can only realize yourself by loving others, and living for their good. "To risk, to give, to labour, to suffer for others is life. One is human, one is one's *self* only when one can say, 'I live, yet not I, but my family, my church, my country,

humanity lives in me.' ” His views of prayer are very far from ours. No one, according to him, ever received anything either for himself or others by prayer. Its influence is all reflex.

‘There is in the book a great truth, though in distorted form—a truth too much ignored by men like Dr. Denney. I believe with R. J. Campbell—or is it Jowett?—who said awhile ago that in the Christianity of the future its mystical side will be more prominent than in the past. But that is the side that you and I have been insisting upon ever since we began to preach—if in rather mechanical form—the doctrine of entire sanctification.

‘When I had finished the book I made a mental experiment. I imagined myself preaching its doctrine at Wesley Hall, and laughed as I pictured to myself the blank countenances, and in the end the weariness of the people. No ! The world still needs—I need—the Christ who came from the bosom of the Father, who was born in Bethlehem, who died on Calvary to atone for the sin of the world—my sin—and rose again and ascended into heaven to make intercession for us : the Christ who is in the world to-day, waiting to be Himself the Divine Source of spiritual life to all who receive Him.

‘There is a sense in which the book is a treatise on Christian perfection. The author appears to me to be more Christian than either Coe or Starbuck. Clearly he is not a monist. The religious life is not, to him, simply a *product*, evolved, like mind and even spirit from a primal germ, but an *infusion* of divine life, a communion with a higher Being. It is a good thing to be able to read such books with interest, and to learn much from them, and all the while to

have so firm a grip of New Testament truth as to be free from all danger of being ensnared. To me, life without the living Christ is unthinkable.'

#### THE OLD AND THE NEW

'Yesterday I was talking with a Congregational minister. He thinks it a great calamity that Dr. Campbell Morgan should be so old-fashioned in his theology, and expresses deep sorrow over it. I was ready to laugh at his lamentation. The old road, whatever the wiser men of to-day may say or think about it, is a road by which tens of thousands have found their way to God—His peace, His image, and His heaven, and by which thousands more are finding it to-day. Professor Forsyth confesses that when he had a pastoral charge he durst not tell his people all his beliefs on these subjects. They were not sufficiently advanced in grace to be able to bear the shock. That would seem to show that there is a place for us old-fashioned men, to prepare them for all they are to hear by-and-by.

'To me the final appeal on all questions of doctrine and personal experience will be to the New Testament. When the New Testament is dethroned from this position we are gone.

'*Sunday*.—I was at Cranmer this morning, finding the service of great help to myself, if to no one else. Mark x. 45, "Life a ministry." Selfishness the cause of nearly all human misery—in home life, social life, commercial life, international life. Being "Peace Sunday" the way was open for some fitting words, and being the beginning of Christmas week I was able to say something on the special lesson

of the incarnation, Christ came not to be ministered unto, &c. Something also on the folly of expecting to build a better social fabric if human nature is to remain what it is. There is only one way by which the community can be saved from selfishness with all its attendant evils—"the expulsive power of a new affection." The people appeared to be greatly interested, and I hope helped.'

#### INSPIRATION, AND CHANGING OF BELIEFS

Dr. ———— concedes more to the higher critics in respect of the authorship and accuracy of St. John's Gospel than I had expected. It is the book which above every other in the Bible seems to lead me nearest to the heart of Christ. To me, notwithstanding the great difference of our Lord's style from that reported in the Synoptists, it proves its own genuineness and inspiration, and I shall never give it up. What will be the relation of Methodism to its old standards half a century hence? There is bound to be a great deal of unrest, leading to a considerable shifting of the position. I fear that, now, many accomplished men among us are shorn of power because of the *reserve* which is laid upon them. They dare not say all they believe. Old Mr. M—— told a friend of mine the other day that he believed everything about the Bible that he believed fifty years ago, without a change in any particular. I cannot say that, but am thankful, notwithstanding, not to be under any restraint, though some old Methodists tell me I am "broad." There is comfort in the thought that the Holy Spirit is in His Church, and will take care of His truth.'

## 'THE PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGION'

'The other day M—— lent me a book (Contemporary Science Series), which I read with a good deal of interest—*The Psychology of Religion*, by Dr. Starbuck. He is of the same school as Professor Coe and Professor James, who writes the preface. But he is more outspoken than either of them in his entire exclusion of the supernatural from all religious phenomena. Perhaps he would say that there is no distinction between the natural and the supernatural. He sent out scores of schedules to Christians of all sorts, with questions as to the thoughts and feelings which led up to conversion, the experience at conversion and subsequent to it. Then another set of schedules to persons who were known to profess entire sanctification, with similar questions. He believes all the testimonies implicitly—even those of some out-and-out perfectionists, but attributes everything to natural causes. "The sense of sin" is a crisis of nervous storm and stress. Conversion is the result of certain action in the nerve centres. You find peace when you surrender your personal will to "the world-will." When the surrender of this personal will to "the larger will" is complete and permanent that is entire sanctification. It is Professor Coe over again. Live in your subconscious self, which is one with all humanity. Then you will be altruistic, because love is God, and God is love. Dr. Starbuck believes thoroughly in revivals, if there is not too much emotion, as a means of leading men to the great crisis.

'He produces some interesting statistics compiled from his schedules, showing the number converted



in missions conducted by the resident or neighbouring ministers, and the number converted under professional evangelists—then the number found steadfast at the end of twelve months. In the first case the evangelists have a large preponderance, but at the end of the year it is very considerably the other way. He also ascertains the ages of conversion of about fifty odd people, and it is appalling to see what an overwhelming majority were brought to a crisis at sixteen, and how rapidly the numbers fall off after that age. He attributes it all to physiological causes. I think he looks upon the Christian doctrines of atonement and surrender and union with Christ as very good machinery for leading men into the right physiological condition—or as we should call it, the religious life. But he does not appear to consider it at all essential. Any other belief that will lead you to the same condition is equally good. I imagined myself preaching his creed to carters and dockers at “Cranmer.”

#### CHESTERTON'S ‘ORTHODOXY’

‘It is surprising how very little some evangelical clergymen trouble themselves about these matters. Looking for our Lord’s speedy coming, they expect things to go from bad to worse, and frankly tell me they have no hope of any amelioration. I suppose their people hold similar views.

‘Yesterday afternoon, at our ministers’ meeting, J. S. C—— read a paper on Chesterton’s book, *Orthodoxy*. It was singularly able, showing a width of knowledge of modern thought that surprised most of his hearers. But there was in it as much of



his own orthodoxy as of Chesterton's. It seems that C—— is a high Anglican. J. S. C—— spoke of those who found rest from their doubts in an infallible Church—as high Anglicans and Catholics. Then of Protestants who had found rest in an infallible book. Then of ourselves, he assumed that as Methodists there was no longer for us faith in an infallible book. We had left it behind. We had rest in a personal experience. He quoted John Wesley in proof of this. No one in the meeting challenged his statement, so I suppose it was generally admitted. His words opened out to me a wide field of thought—too wide to be described here and now. But his position, as he spoke of it, had very much the appearance of the last ditch. Of course I believe in a personal experience, but—how did I come by it, and by what means is it fed and expanded? Whence has come to me the knowledge of Christ and of the conditions and the fullness of His great salvation? I have nothing to say to these brethren. God will take care of His own cause by the instrumentality of us or others of His servants.'

#### MODERNISM AND HIS OWN PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

'Professor James is of the same school as Coe and Starbuck. Or rather they are of his school and quote him as an authority. So far as I can see they readily believe all testimonies and are very tolerant of all creeds, each creed being so much machinery by which men are led into union with God, though their God is not the personal Being in whom we believe. Their system seems to lie somewhere between mysticism and pantheism. They are, I

think, monists, believing that all the universe—including matter, mind, force, and all the rest—is reducible to one simple element—God. It is more—I am afraid to say how much more—than twenty years since I read Mark Rutherford. He is a much older man than you appear to think. Have you read his *Catharine Furze*?

‘I have just read that testimony by Goethe that you have quoted from Professor, James. I am about 74—his age. My circumstances have not been nearly so favourable as his, but I am thankful to be able to speak much better of life in this world than he does. I have had many sorrows, and though I am not of sanguine disposition, life has been a joy to me, and is so still. Two great beliefs give me rest from the worry and dissatisfaction which torment so many: (1) that God is a Person. I cannot define the specific sense in which He is a Person; and (2) that God is *Love*. He *must* be love. An Agnostic will confess that if there be a Creator He must at least be the equal of His highest creation. It is a logical absurdity to say that any creature can love more than God loves. If, therefore, there is anything in creation that I cannot harmonize with love, it is because of my limited faculties. All must be right. When this, the great burden of Bible teaching, is heartily received, how much of perplexity and pain is taken out of the life! I think some of these discontented men expect from the world more than they give. They are selfish.’

#### CHANGES IN OUR CONCEPTION OF CHRISTIANITY

‘I have felt lately just as you do when you say,

“How ancient is all religious experience !” Only the other day I thought that if I were robbed of my belief in the inspiration of the Psalms very little would be gone from their worth to me. They would still be outpourings from the hearts of men who had had *personal knowledge* of God’s goodness and faithfulness. And there would still be inspiration in them, if not in the high sense in which we have been accustomed to use the word.

‘ You ask whether a universal change of thought is not of divine arrangement. What about the Church of Rome ? And the great and rapid change that is taking place in the Anglican Church ? I think that each individual Christian, more especially if he is a teacher, is under obligation to go to the Fountain-Head for his knowledge of divine things—availing himself, of course, of the help of masters in Israel. I fully agree that in the last century much of Christ’s teaching on social ethics was ignored, though one must not forget that Clarkson, Zachary Macaulay, Wilberforce, and Lord Shaftesbury belonged to the school which in these days is so glibly condemned. I admit that we have not given the prominence that we should to the setting up of Christ’s Kingdom in this world. But so few men seem to be able to keep the balance. They run into extremes—I was going to say shallow extremes. There are great tracts of Christ’s teaching that many modern preachers never so much as look at. One half the words He spoke might as well never have been spoken. Think of all His parables. Of how many of them do we ever hear an exposition ? Who can read the Gospels without feeling that the day of judgement—whatever it may mean—involving the future condition of

the people to whom He spoke, was always present to His thoughts? All history shows that the tendency of the Church, under the old dispensation as under the new, has been towards decadence. Now and then a Moses, an Elijah, a John the Baptist, a Martin Luther, lifts up his voice, and there is a return and a revival. I believe that in Protestant Christendom there is now a revival. But there are numbers of our own men that it has not reached. We of all men ought to be in the van of the movement back to Christ's own teaching, with the light that came upon it at Pentecost. I believe that, so far as our missions are concerned, we are in the van. But I should like to know what Dr. Fitchett said to the ministers at City Road after his itinerancy of the country. Evidently he told them some things that were not to be proclaimed on the house-tops. Doesn't it seem rather a paradox that so many earnest, soul-saving preachers have been Calvinists? Whitefield, Howell Harris, McCheyne, Finney, Spurgeon, Moody, Torrey, &c.'

#### SCIENCE AND THE SPIRITUAL

'Mr. H——'s letter is very interesting and very clever, but not convincing. The scientific men of to-day have greatly narrowed the chasm that separates the material from the spiritual. But, while they have made it much easier to believe in the spiritual, and what we used to call the supernatural, I don't think they will bridge the chasm. When John says, "God is light" he never meant what they are trying to make the words mean. The expression is, and always—I think—will be, purely

figurative. "God is light," but *light is not God*. The earth is in darkness half its time, and then where is God? I know where He is. "The darkness and the light are both alike to Thee." "Canst thou, by searching, find out God?" I believe the answer will always be "No," though modern science is making it more easy to realize the immanence of God.'

#### ADAPTING PREACHING TO THE TIMES

'I wonder whether, if Jesus Christ were in the world to-day, He would approve of this effort of modern times to bridge over the chasm between the church and the world, and to offer to "sensible" men of the world, and scientific and literary men, a form of Christianity that they can accept; or whether He would insist upon a separation as complete as in His own day. There is something of a disposition to please everybody all round: working men, by the preaching of socialistic doctrines—not so universally popular among them as some preachers seem to think—and educated people by eliminating as far as possible the miraculous element from Christianity. I suppose that within limits it is right, but there are perils. I am inclined to think that to outsiders Christ crucified, faithfully preached, will always be an "offence," and that we must not shrink from contempt.

#### THEOLOGY IN TRANSITION

'It takes a good deal to surprise me in some directions, but I am a good deal surprised to find how far some of our men have travelled in the

direction of the higher critics. We are clearly in a transition state. Whether things will come to a crisis, or whether the new views will come to be so generally accepted that no one will be left to lift up a voice in protest, I don't know. On many accounts the latter is the more desirable. The trouble will come when preachers are so absolutely honest as to say in the pulpit all they say to one another, and tell out all they believe and disbelieve. Perhaps the transition from the old to the new will be as gradual in the pew as in the pulpit. Already there are two schools, the Holiness people belonging for the most part to the old.

'It would undoubtedly help us to insist more strongly than we do—though some good people would be shocked—that the revelation prior to Christ was a very gradual one; that the light in olden time was very partial, and that, therefore, there was much error mixed with truth. It would not be necessary to defend as some commentators have felt bound to defend, the conduct of Israel and the horrible massacre of women and children which often followed Israel's victories. But let men say what they will, God has often spoken to me, and does still speak to me, from the Old Testament.'



## CHAPTER VI

### SIDE-LIGHTS ON BOOKS AND READING

A Book-lover—Mrs. Gaskell—A Literary Group—Julius and Charles Hare—Milton and Modern Preaching—‘Quo Vadis?’—Scott’s Novels—The English Poets—The Mystics—Wesley’s *Journal*—George Borrow—Dr. Whyte on Newman—Mrs. Lynn Linton and F. W. Robertson—Novelists: Thomas Hardy—Richard Jefferies—The Winkworths—The Literature of War—Reading as a Hobby—Habits of Reading—Good Biographies—Wesley’s *Journal* Again—Effects of Reading.

LIKE other men who have entered upon their life-work without the advantage of a public school or college training, John Brash’s university was literature. He was always reading. Canon Page-Roberts, with whom he had an acquaintance in earlier days, told a common friend that he had never met a man more conversant with English classics. It was by this means that he kept up the freshness of his ministry and his influence over younger men. People who thought that his reading was confined to such books as Jeremy Taylor’s *Holy Living and Dying* were surprised at his familiarity with Scott’s novels and his judgement upon Thomas Hardy and R. L. Stevenson.

#### A BOOK LOVER

In 1903 he writes, ‘If I were living in my own house and expected to tarry in this mortal state ten or a dozen years longer I should have a set of



shelves, filled with these cheap editions—thin paper and other—of standard books that are being issued by so many publishing firms. But I, like you, find old books, that have been lying on my shelves comparatively neglected, very interesting. Tennyson's *Life* has sent me back to his poetry. My volume does not contain anything written after 1889, but it is a goodly volume, and I like him better than ever before, perhaps because I have time to read slowly. I think that is one good use of poetry to correct the skimming habit that grows upon you if you spend much time over the newspaper and gossiping literature.'

During his periods of illness, even during his last long time of weakness, books and reading were his solace.

'I can read two or three hours a day and have just got through the weeklies. What a large space the *B. W.* gives to fiction—reviews and reading matter. I suppose it is because the editor is himself a great novel-reader. No doubt he reads rapidly, covering as much ground in a few hours as some would get over in as many days, and I dare say he dictates his *notes* to a shorthand writer. It will not, therefore, take much of his time, but two long stories and one short one each week, besides all the reviews, give it the pre-eminence for this class of literature over all other religious weeklies. He is a born editor, with an instinctive knowledge of what people will read. And what a good paper it is!'

MRS. GASKELL

'Don't you find,' he asks in another letter, 'the *Letters of Matthew Arnold* rather disappointing?'

They seem to me to make rather prominent the faults of his qualities. It would not be right to call him a snob, but along with his refinement and culture is a rather ill-concealed contempt for "philistines" of all sorts. I can always read Mrs. Gaskell. She has a good knowledge of the Lancashire dialect, but it is not perfect, like that of George Eliot of the Midlands, or that of Charlotte Brontë of the West Riding. *Cranford* is amusing.'

Such passages as the following are not without pathos :

'This has been, in some respects, a poor week, owing partly to a bad cold, and partly, I think, to reaction after the strain of Sidcup. My greatest luxury has been to sit in my rocking-chair with closed eyes. I have read a little of Shakespeare, and Mrs. Gaskell's *Ruth*, a beautiful story, but too painful. As I grow older I have an increasing dislike to tragedy, or any approach to it in fiction or the drama. It is a discomfort to me to find something of the sort is coming. I can understand why Ruskin should dislike *The Bride of Lammermoor* and *Kenilworth*, because of their tragic endings—why he should dislike them, but not why he should dissuade young people from reading them, because they are both good. Mr. Gladstone said the former was Scott's best. I am not sure that the feeling is not selfish—an unwillingness to be disturbed by contact, even in imagination, with sin and sorrow.'

#### A LITERARY GROUP

'There are two literary circles, or circles of literary men, whose sayings and doings form a

story that will never lose its charm. One is that to which we are introduced in Boswell's *Johnson*, and the other that to which you refer, including Coleridge, Lamb, Southey, Wordsworth, and Hazlitt, though the last was a rather bad sort. I find it hard to forgive Carlyle his ill-concealed contempt for poor Lamb. But they were run in entirely different mental moulds. Have you read Canon Ainger's *Life of Lamb*?—a good book. I greatly wonder that none of the publishers of these modern series give us Leigh Hunt's *Autobiography*. I have read it three times during the last half century, and would read it again if I could easily lay my hands upon it. He is said to be the original of Harold Skimpole. If so, Dickens did him a cruel injustice. He and his family were thriftless, borrowing all sorts of things from the Carlyles, their neighbours, and affording them a good deal of amusement, but Carlyle had a great liking for him—an impossible thing if he had at all resembled Skimpole. C. wrote him a charming letter after reading the *Autobiography*, placing it next to Boswell.'

#### JULIUS AND CHARLES HARE

'You speak of J. and C. Hare. Is your reference to the *Memorials of a Quiet Life*?—a long, delightful book, presenting a beautiful picture of quiet unaffected goodness. But how strongly it contrasts with the strenuous life of many of the clergy to-day! I was once talking with Mrs. Paynter (wife of Rev. Francis P.) about it. She seemed pleased and surprised that I had read it. A clergyman by my side knew nothing at all about any of the Hares. Only

a few days ago I spent a pleasant and I think profitable hour, in *Guesses at Truth*.'

#### MILTON AND MODERN PREACHING

'The papers are full of Milton. I shall never forget my first reading of *Paradise Lost* in my fourteenth year. The book took hold of me. I could read nothing else. It has held my imagination and memory in a grip that has only gradually relaxed. For the first twenty years of my ministry my preaching on sin and salvation and the last things was influenced more by *Paradise Lost* than by any other book; I hope not more than by the Bible—and yet I am not sure. My opinion is that this has been the case with many others besides myself—locals as well as itinerants. I wonder if it has been for good. If there was evil in it, the evil was not so great as that of the nebulous preaching so prevalent in our own day, even in Methodist pulpits. K—— thinks that for generations past there has never been a period when Methodism had such a chance of laying hold of the English people as now. If it is not embracing the chance as it ought, not much good is done by sighing over it—still less by grumbling. What is left for each of us is to cultivate the little patch assigned to him by God's providences.'

#### 'QUO VADIS?'

'Speaking of novels—when I received your letter I was just finishing a novel—a rather long one—that I had been reading at intervals for a week. *Quo*

*Vadis?* by Sienkiewicz, the Pole. It is a vivid, not to say lurid story of the time of Nero. He presents such pictures of the voluptuousness, the utterly shameless licentiousness of the period as are scarcely fit to be read by modest people ; but his aim is good, and I don't see how he could have done otherwise. Then a revelation of the character of Nero, with what is evidently a very literal account of the burning of Rome, and the unspeakably cruel persecutions of Christians that followed. St. Peter figures largely in the night meetings of Christians. So does St. Paul, but in a less degree, "a little bald man with weak eyes, and a crooked nose." The tale is painful, but ends happily. It is, I should think, truer than many a history. The author is a man of great genius. The book showed signs of having been largely read, probably by Catholics. Perhaps you have read *The Cloister and the Hearth*, by Charles Reade—a fine historical novel.'

#### SCOTT'S NOVELS

'I am so glad to hear you speak well of *Old Mortality*. There is a fullness—an amplitude in Scott's stories that you do not find in modern novels. Ruskin said it was one of the sorrows of his old age that he knew Scott by heart. I am saved from that sorrow, but *when I have* time, I can always turn with pleasure to the "Wizard." Henry Rogers said a good novel was one that you could open anywhere and lay down at any time, and gave that merit to the Waverley Series—some would question both statements.'

## THE ENGLISH POETS

‘Alas for us prosaic men! It was not always so with me. When I was young I read much English poetry—Dryden, Pope, Goldsmith, Crabbe, Cowper, &c., and committed large portions to memory. But during the busy years that have followed the taste has been uncultivated—result, atrophy. I retain my love for Shakespeare, and spend an occasional hour with Tennyson, but as a rule I skip most things of the poetic sort, whether in rhyme or prose.’

## THE MYSTICS

‘Vaughan, to whom you refer, devoted great care to the study of the lives, the character, and the beliefs of the mystics, and was sincere in his desire to understand them, but I have always felt sorry that he was not more sympathetic. There is an *aloofness* that I think was a hindrance to a perfect comprehension. It was constitutional, and he was not conscious of it. I have often wondered what it was that drew him specially to the study. No doubt there were errors, but many of the mystics kept the true light burning in dark times.

‘Wesley was more of a mystic than he knew himself to be, and attracted to himself some of the best mysticism of his age. That which repelled him seems to have been what he thought their tendency to undervalue the *Written Word of God*. Antinomianism—happy sinnership—the inner light of Quakerism—mysticism—all fell under the same suspicion. There was a very practical side to his



character. In reading his *Journal* a short time ago I often found him saying that he had been to church and heard "a good sermon." I suspect it was a sermon on the duties of life, and high Christian morality, to which he attached increasing importance with advancing years. The same sermons would not have pleased him so well in his younger days.

' There is much to be learnt from Madame Guyon, but her teaching is defective and hardly scriptural. There is more in prayer than the "inward stillness and sweet retirement into God" of which she speaks. I think of Paul writing to the Romans, "I beseech you . . . that you strive together in your prayers to God for me," and of Epaphras "striving fervently for you in prayers," &c., and of our Lord in the garden "offering up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears." Bishop Moule, at Keswick, said some good things on naturalness in prayer ("Let your requests be *made known* to God"). "Tell God as if He needed the information. Somehow He does need it. From His own eternal point of view He wants you to tell Him, and therefore He wants your telling. Tell Him. Abraham's servant told Him, when by the well at Mesopotamia," &c. Personally the prayers in which I get most entirely *out of myself* are the most profitable. Guyon, Fénelon, and Upham had a very powerful influence upon my Christian life in the earlier years of my ministry. In the end I discovered the mischief they were doing me. Very likely it arose from a morbid tendency in that direction. But there are some who need—because of an opposite tendency—just the corrective which these writers afford. They



always bewitch me so long as I am reading them.'

#### WESLEY'S JOURNAL

'I have just finished Wesley's *Journal* and Tyerman's *Life*. I read the *Life* till it brought me up to the time when the *Journal* began ; then I read the two side by side—four or five years of *Journal*, and the same period of *Life*. Tyerman fills up the gaps, and explains things that in the *Journal* are not very clear. I now know Wesley better than I ever did. What has impressed me most of all is his unwearied diligence. Gladstone was a diligent man, but he is nowhere in comparison with Wesley. Think of the old man of over eighty preaching three times a day, yet finding opportunity to spend hours in visiting the sick and the poor. He seems never to have hesitated to ride twenty, or thirty, or more miles to visit a sick man or woman, however poor, who greatly desired to see him, riding back to keep his engagements. Then meeting the classes, talking with members one by one, dropping those he counted backsliders, and re-writing class-papers. And all the while writing letters innumerable. As I have read of it all I have bowed my head in shame, feeling as if I should narrowly escape the doom of the "wicked and slothful servant."

'But what trouble Wesley had with his preachers over the doctrine of entire sanctification ! He was always complaining. Very few of them seem to have urged the people with any earnestness. I have been struck with the slight allusions to the subject—with one or two familiar exceptions—in the *Lives of the Early Methodist Preachers*.'

GEORGE BORROW

‘ I read that life of George Borrow, by Knapp, two or three years ago, and was much interested. How singular that he preserved such a dead silence about his doings during his eight years’ disappearance! Likely enough Knapp is right in his conjecture that part of the time was spent in a Spanish prison. Hence his knowledge of Spanish gipsy-lore. I doubt whether he was converted in our sense of the word. After his engagement to the Bible Society he writes piously to his mother, but the style is stilted and artificial. What do you think ?

‘ What an impracticable being he was ! And what a thorn in the side of poor John Murray the publisher ! He was a disappointed man, and the public was disappointed with him. He did not come by his own until after his death. That—now that I have written it—seems a queer thing to say, and yet there is truth in it.’

DR. WHYTE ON NEWMAN

‘ Like you I have been much interested in Dr. A. Whyte’s *Newman*. What I do not like in Dr. W. is that he always speaks to Christians as if they knew in their inmost natures that their hearts were full of black wickedness. In one of the *Newman* papers he quoted, with approval, Jacob Behmen’s confessions that ‘notwithstanding all the revelations of God with which he had been favoured his heart was still full of envy, selfishness, and *malignity*. This is either mock humility, or it is a proclamation of the futility of Christianity. What

is it for if not to make men good? Barnabas was "a good man." In any case it dishonours the Saviour by depreciating His work and His power to save.'

MRS. E. LYNN LINTON AND F. W. ROBERTSON

'What a contrast between the world of Mrs. E. Lynn Linton and that of Miss C——! Mrs. L.'s is a gospel of despair. John Morley says similar things in one of his biographies—that of Rousseau, or of Voltaire. I was reminded of a striking passage in one of F. W. Robertson's addresses to working men. But he means his counsel to be a gospel of *hope*. Here are a few lines from it: "If there be no God, and no future state, yet, even then, it is better to be generous than selfish, better to be chaste than licentious, better to be true than false, better to be brave than to be a coward. Blessed beyond all earthly blessedness is the man who, in the tempestuous darkness of the soul, has dared to hold fast to these venerable landmarks. Thrice blessed is he who—when all is drear and cheerless within and without, when his teachers terrify him, and his friends shrink from him—has obstinately clung to moral good. Thrice blessed because *his* night shall pass into clear bright day."

'I cannot tell any one what a bright guiding star those words were to me in a dark night of doubt long years ago.'

NOVELISTS: THOMAS HARDY

'Thanks for *The Bookman*, which has afforded me an hour or two's interesting reading. It may be a

lazy taste, but I like to read *about* books, and to know what is going on in the literary world. But what prodigious quantities of fiction some men seem able to read. W. R. N., for example, who, besides modern novels, speaks occasionally of having read an old one twenty times.

‘I suppose we have to place G. Meredith first in the rank of living novelists, but he is obscure—now and then provokingly so. In my eyes Thomas Hardy towers above all the rest. One of his faults—and it is a very grave one—is that he is becoming increasingly prurient. *Jude the Obscure* is frightful, as probably you know. But even more injurious than this is—I think—his utter pessimism. He clearly believes that if there are any unseen powers they are all malign, bent upon human ruin, and that many men come into the world condemned beforehand, by temperament and circumstances, to lives of sin and misery—if indeed there be such a thing as sin—without power to help themselves. His principles are deadly. Happily the bulk of novel readers skim the surface of the story without any perception of the underlying teaching. But what a charm there is in his earlier books! Do you know *The Return of the Native*? I have never read a book in which the natural features of the country, the people, and the tone of the story are so ultimately—I was going to say so mystically—combined to form one perfect whole. In many books descriptions of scenery may be skipped without much loss. But in Hardy’s this is impossible.’

## RICHARD JEFFERIES

‘It is a far cry from *The Hibbert Journal* to the *Life of Richard Jefferies* (by Edward Thomas, published this year), but the change is refreshing. The book, however, though very interesting is not quite satisfactory. At least half of it consists of extracts from his own writings—many of these no doubt necessary—but we are told almost nothing of his friendships, and have exceedingly meagre bits of his correspondence. His wife is almost ignored, perhaps she was a Christian. The biographer is much irritated by Jefferies’ return in his last days to the faith of his early manhood, and occupies three pages in explaining away his “supposed recantation.” He was weak and yielding, we are told, ready to acquiesce in the urging of the solicitous friends about him. The rather deep Christian feeling of Jefferies’ early manhood is accounted for by his weak health, though he was in a much worse condition when he wrote *The Story of My Heart*. Why could not the simple testimony of his wife be allowed to stand without remark? Edward Thomas might have learnt a lesson from Morley on Gladstone.’

## THE WINKWORTHS

‘I have spent the week in a very good book, *Memorials of Two Sisters*—the Winkworths. They were trained in Low Church Evangelicism—narrow and intensely Calvinistic. Catherine, translator of *Lyra Germanica* and other poetry, broadened out into a Churchwoman of Maurice’s school—very earnest and devout. Susanna, translator of the *Theologia*

*Germanica*, *Tauler*, &c., became sceptical, then for some years was a Unitarian, but never rested until she was brought back to belief in Christ as God incarnate, and to a life of union with God in Him. It is cheering to find so much goodness in people of a school of thought so different from one's own. They were both hard workers in Church-life and among the poor; Catherine in the Higher Education movement. They had a remarkably large circle of acquaintance—Maurice, Kingsley, Dean Stanley, Bunsen (intimate), Froude, F. W. Newman, James and Harriet Martineau, Charlotte Brontë, Mrs. Gaskell, R. H. Hutton and many besides. They had a sister married to William Shaen, an intimate of Mazzini, with whom they had much intercourse; Kossuth also. It is pleasant to find James Martineau saying of *Tauler* that "it will stand, after my Bible, with Plato, and Leighton, and the *Theologia Germanica*, and Coleridge, and Tennyson, and the German and Wesley Hymns." And, years afterwards, on receiving from Catherine a copy of the *Christian Singers of Germany*: "After the Scriptures the Wesley Hymn-Book appears to me the grandest instrument of popular religious culture that Christendom has ever produced. But for the German antecedents, however, it would never have come into existence." Note that that was written in 1869.'

#### THE LITERATURE OF WAR

'It is rather singular that while in my younger years stories of battles had great attraction for me, the interest in them has in my later years quite died



out. Before I was twenty-one I had read Alison's *History of Europe*, from 1789 to 1815, in twenty volumes: by far the greater part, and to me the most interesting part, consisting of detailed descriptions of battles. Then in the years following I read Kinglake's *Crimean War*, with its vivid accounts of Alma, Inkerman, Balaclava, &c. But there has grown upon me the conviction that if war is a necessity, it is a very barbarous necessity. I have talked scores of hours with soldiers who had been in action, and cannot help realizing the butchery and the devilry over which the historian throws such a glamour of romance and heroism. I am content to know results.

'Many of "the Deeds that won the Empire" were done before the fighting began, and were not always deeds on which God smiled.'

#### READING AS A HOBBY

'Talking about hobbies, I have never in my life felt the need of a hobby. I mean in my ministerial life. From the age of thirteen till I entered the ministry the 'cello was my hobby. It seemed to be too clumsy an article to take with me to my first circuit. So it was given up altogether and I never missed it. I think my reading tastes are more miscellaneous than those of most men. All sorts of books are welcome if they are well written. Reading for pleasure and for profit means, however, two very different things. I fear there has been a great deal too much of the former. When I stood before the July Committee "Father" Jackson said to me "Mr. Brash, whenever did you find time to read



all those books? ” I was taken aback, not having supposed that my list was longer than other men’s. So I told him that from my early boyhood it had been my habit to carry a book in my pocket, and expressed an opinion that it would have been better for me if I had not read so many. “ Yes, and read your Bible more,” said the old man. “ Yes, sir,” I replied feeling that the comment was true. And now at the end of half a century I fear that the words of the aged saint are more true than when they were spoken.’

#### HABITS OF READING

‘ If duty would allow, I could read, with short intervals for meals—with no intervals at all if I were alone—from rising in the morning until I retired at night. *Reading to purpose* is another matter. But how valuable the habit is as a diversion, using that word in its primary sense. To a man in trouble the only true rest is found in casting his burden on the Lord. But it is not healthy to be always thinking of the burden, even though it is where it ought to be. So an interesting, mind-absorbing book transports you for a time into another world, saving you, even in your spiritual rest, from the monotonous note that becomes tiring, and thus lengthens your days.’

#### GOOD BIOGRAPHIES

‘ It was made plain to me that I was frittering away too much of my time in the reading of newspapers and snippets, and that I must turn over a new

leaf. In one respect I am like Carlyle. In his old age he turned more and more to biography, finding nothing more profitable to him in every way. It has been, I think, my weakness in the past to read, proportionately, too much of it, but I think that now the propensity may be indulged without harm. John Bright once said that he never had so strong a feeling that his time had been well spent as when he rose from reading the life of a great or good man.'

#### WESLEY'S JOURNAL AGAIN

'I am reading Wesley's *Journal*, being too languid to give myself to much thinking. I thought I had read the journals so well in my younger years that I should find them very familiar. But the effect of rolling years and added experience enables me to read them in a new light. What a wonderful time that was in Bristol in 1739! It reminds one of the Welsh revival—with this difference, that the people were ignorant of the gospel, and needed Methodist preaching. I am greatly struck with Wesley's habit—a habit which I sometimes gently reprobate—of opening the Bible at random for instruction or guidance in times of special perplexity or difficulty—in some cases a good many times in a day, e.g. "I was asking in the evening that God would fulfil all His promises in my soul, when I opened my Testament on these words, 'My hour is not yet come.' " When I was a lad I read them, and the third volume, so full of ghost stories, frightened me out of my wits, and gave me many an hour of wretchedness. But I shall read the volumes through.'

## EFFECTS OF READING

‘ You speak of my time for reading. Unfortunately I labour under a very grave disability. I can read general biography, or travel, or history, all day, but can never give more than a short time to theological or spiritual reading of any kind. It very shortly brings on an oppressive fullness and pain in my head, from which I have suffered more or less for nearly forty years, but which has grown worse. Sometimes I think it must be the result of bad habit, and resolve that I will read such books exactly as I would read any other. But it is of no use. If it be true, as physiologists say, that each kind of thought is localized in some specific portion of the brain, I suppose that there must have been a time in my life when I did not preserve the balance as I should have done. Certainly I never read too much theology, or half enough, but I believe there was an ignorantly foolish and unnecessary strain on the devotional side, and the mischief has never been repaired. I am thankful that I am still able to preach, after a fashion. What little power to write I ever had—and it never was much—is gone.’

## CHAPTER VII

### OUR LORD'S ATONEMENT AND UNION WITH HIMSELF

The Atonement in Modern Preaching—Do the Broad Views satisfy?—The Atonement and Justification—A Basis for Certitude—Christ's 'Finished Work'—The Old Evangel—Two Positions and the Simple Truth—Union with the Redeemer—A Vivid Realization—Christ-centred—The Fullness of Jesus—'Back to Christ'—Our Lord's Presence.

THESE two vital subjects are placed together because one is the foundation of the other. The two friends throughout the long period of their intimacy were absolutely one in their faith in our Lord's sufficient sacrifice. It was after long years of Christian life and service that one wrote to the other, 'If it were not for the blood of Jesus Christ, I should instantly sink into despair.' Over and over again, as these pages show, and most emphatically in later years, John Brash affirmed that religion with him meant union with the living Christ, but that union ever had for its origin and life His Sacrificial Death.

'There is not one of all the Keswick men,' he wrote, 'who insists more strongly and constantly than I do upon our continual dependence upon the atoning blood for peace with God. Webster told me that he was very much impressed by the things that I had said on this point.'

Every moment, Lord, I want  
The merit of Thy death,  
Never shall I want it less  
When Thou that gift hast given, &c.

As Dr. Dale said, to believe in the Atonement is one thing, to believe in a theory of the Atonement is another, yet John Brash had his fears lest there should be a shifting of the ground on this doctrine.

#### THE ATONEMENT IN MODERN PREACHING

‘Here is Denney, with thanks.<sup>1</sup> He makes it very clear that in the estimation of the New Testament writers the death of Christ is the great central fact of Christianity, that it had a very specific relation to human sin, and that it was vicarious. But the book has not left the definite impression on my mind that Dale’s did. Perhaps it did not find me in exactly the same mental condition. I quite agree with Dr. Denney that modern evangelical preachers do not make the Atonement so prominent as did the first apostles and first preachers of Christianity. This applies to the Methodist ministry more than to the evangelical section of the Church of England. I was talking to a church lady in Kingstown, who had been all her life in the habit of occasional attendance at the Wesleyan Chapel. She told me that she had never once heard the doctrine so explicitly stated as by me in one of my addresses. I was not surprised, though I did not say so. To me it used to be distressing during the ten years

<sup>1</sup> *The Death of Christ.*

in which I listened to one sermon a Sunday. Perhaps a knowledge of the doctrine by the congregation is too much assumed.'

#### DO THE BROAD VIEWS SATISFY?

'We had an interesting ministers' meeting over P——'s paper. He, with others, has quite given up the idea of substitution in any form in connexion with the atonement, considering that much damage had been done by the crude way in which the doctrine had been presented. Evidently they wanted a presentation that would commend itself to philosophical and cultured people. Some good things were said on the other side. L—— said it had been a stumbling-block from the beginning and always would be; and a theory that presented no stumbling-block was self-condemned. M—— said he had not been able to hold the purely subjective view during the last fortnight, as he had had to lead about twenty seeking sinners to Christ, and had found it necessary to tell them that Christ had done a work *for* them, by virtue of which they could be delivered from condemnation. It was the idea of something done for us by Christ that these advanced men so warmly repudiated. P—— in his reply said that the doctrine of substitution had never in any form appealed to his consciousness. He preferred Paul's view—union with Christ—"I am crucified with Christ." It was the last address, closing the discussion; otherwise I, silent now though I am, should have asked him whether it was not St. Paul who above all others taught the doctrine of a work done for us, whether the doctrine of mystical union (a

phrase used several times) did not rest upon the other?

‘ I don’t think I told you that P——’s paper on Evolution and the Atonement was suggested by Blatchford’s (“ Nunquam ”) articles in the *Clarion*. I had read most of them, and was very sorry they had been written. The *Clarion* has a great influence over certain classes of working men. Several said that B——’s idea of Christianity had been gained from those men who presented what they called the crude idea of the Atonement as a substitutionary death. But I cannot believe that at all, seeing that he denies the divinity of Christ, the written revelation, the fatherhood of God, and the efficacy of prayer. How can such men be won by concessions? I remember that many years ago W. Page Roberts and other Broad Church clergy issued a manifesto declaring that the evangelical creed was a travesty of Christianity, and presenting their broader views. But the working men and the secularists, to whom the appeal was made, laughed at them and held them up to ridicule. Bradlaugh’s son-in-law (Dr. Aveling, I think it was) asked Roberts and his friends if they really thought that secularists had not read the New Testament, and did not know what it taught about Jesus Christ, about the meaning of His death, about the resurrection, the day of judgement, and heaven and hell.

‘ It appears to me that while we cannot help mourning over all opposing and malign influences, we are not to worry, but to imitate St. Paul and go steadily on preaching ‘ Christ Crucified,’ a doctrine



that always has been a stumbling-block to some and foolishness to others.'

#### THE ATONEMENT AND JUSTIFICATION

'How clearly Dr. Denney brings out the fact that all through the New Testament the death of Christ was substitutionary! But, like most men who become absorbed in the contemplation of *one* great truth, there are others to which he hardly attaches sufficient importance—the believer's union with the living Christ for example—"Mystic Union." He treats the subject rather impatiently. I can make little of the pages in which he explains—explains away, some men would say—Romans vi. I am quite sure that no congregation could understand him.

'He speaks of the "finality" of the atonement, evidently inferring from it the final perseverance of the saints; and notes the difference between the great act of the sinner's justification and the daily forgiveness of the child. When we were young we were taught, in harmony with Wesley's creed, that justification, adoption, and forgiveness were substantially the same blessing, each term being suggestive of a specific aspect of Deity. But, without accepting Dr. Denney's Calvinism (made prominent in this point of justification once for all by W. R. Nicoll and Dr. John Watson) I am now sure there is a real distinction. Dr. A. T. Pierson once said to me that many Christians suffered loss through their failure to distinguish between justification and forgiveness. "What *is* the difference?" I said. He laughed and did not reply, being too considerate, I suppose, to tread upon my Arminian corns. But as

one looks back upon life one can remember times of coldness, backslidings in heart, and even acts of unfaithfulness for which one sorely needed forgiveness. But was there not even then something remaining? Is not the state of justification a more permanent one than we usually admit it to be in our teaching? But—I must remember Wesley's question in Conference, "Have we not leaned too much towards Calvinism?" "

#### A BASIS FOR CERTITUDE

'A passage in your letter reminds me that in speaking, especially to young people, on the blood of Christ, I am careful to explain that it is a highly figurative expression, and means the power of the living Saviour to deliver us from sin by virtue of His atoning death for us on the Cross. I am led to do this because I hear some men cry "the blood, the blood" until they make me shudder, so coarse and material and therefore so false are their ideas. Where I dare, I say, "There is no blood. That which was shed by Christ on the Cross was drunk up by the green earth and disappeared for ever."

'There is nothing more remarkable to me than the clear, abiding conviction I have had during the last few months that Christ's work for me is *complete*. It is a very commonplace thing to say, yet to me there is a reality lifting it out of the commonplace. I know nothing of acts of faith. I could almost say I know nothing of the habit of faith. There is a clear apprehension of the completeness which quite satisfies me. I see the way to the Father wide open always. There is nothing I can do but just

ask for the supply of all my need. I sometimes wonder that the supply is not more abundant. Perhaps it would be if the need were greater, or if my physical frame were stronger. I know I have only said that at which many a Christian would smile, and over which he would say, "How is it that he didn't know it all sooner?" "

#### CHRIST'S 'FINISHED WORK'

'I am reading Hebrews, with Commentary, by Professor A. B. Davidson (Clark's Handbooks). It is a copious commentary, with essays on The Rest of God, the Word of God, "sanctify," &c. It will occupy me a long time, but I need a tonic. Already I have gained a more exalted view of the Son of God, and the greatness of His work for "us men." What I need most is a brighter revelation of His love kindling a responsive flame in this "poor, stony heart," not so much for my own sake as that there may be more power in my cold, intercessory prayers. What our Calvinist friends call "the finished work" for myself was never so plain to me as now. Doubts have fled. Nor did I ever see salvation so near to all men, if they will only believe and receive. Oh to know how so to put it to them as to bring them to the Saviour's feet! It is too late for me to do it, but if I were able to show other men! There is more of this in C. Wesley's hymns, the earlier hymns of the old books, than in modern preaching. It is a matter between God and myself. Thank God for a full atonement, for ceaseless intercession for an inexhaustible supply of grace! I do thank Him that this is the heritage of every one who

will turn to Him. There is where I find my great theme for prayer.'

#### THE OLD EVANGEL

'It has been a great pleasure to me to read in book form *The Church's One Foundation*. W. R. N. so clearly defines the evangelical position with respect to the person and work of Jesus Christ. One can forgive a few aberrations from the old tradition on the inspiration of the Old Testament to a man who abides so firmly by the inspiration of the New. I do not know what will become of the world if the old evangel should be treated as an obsolete doctrine. What else arrests and saves sinful men? We had a few "broad" people at Blackheath, and I remember how Edward Smith startled them at a Home missionary meeting when after the story of his triumphs at Clerkenwell, he told them that all the good had been done by the preaching of "The Blood Theology." He said that no other teaching touched them. But it needs a warm heart and a tender spirit. I feel that more and more. God give it to us!'

#### TWO POSITIONS AND THE SIMPLE TRUTH

'Dora Greenwell (whose letters I cannot just now refer to and quote) is at the opposite pole from Bushnell, who did not believe there was any need in the nature of things for an atonement. The sole virtue of the death of Christ was, in his opinion, in its moral influence upon men. Dora Greenwell, on the other hand, can see nothing at all in the doctrine

of a *vicarious* death to appeal to any one. She herself was not in the least touched by it. She, therefore, believed that there was some inscrutable need in the divine nature, altogether hidden from us, for the death of Christ before God *could* pardon sin. But when the condemned criminal in his cell,<sup>1</sup> as he listened while I read, "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth," sprang to his feet, clapped his hands, and cried, "I see it!" and from that time had peace of conscience, was there not something in the death of Christ which met a law of righteousness instinctive in his own nature? I should not say that the truth lies between these two positions, but in the comprehension of both. But "'Tis mystery all!" "Which things the angels desire to look into."

#### UNION WITH CHRIST

In reading these passages from the pen of one who lived in communion with the Highest, the impression is made that it is not so much the study of particular texts that matters, or belief of particular doctrines, important as these are, but the general effect of divine revelation. To one who, like John Brash, has read the Gospels for a lifetime, there comes an incorporation of their divine teaching with his very self. He would never have claimed this as an experience; but by every law of the mind, his intelligence and heart had become *saturated* with the principles of Christ's teaching. He therefore lived beyond religious conventions; he had become

<sup>1</sup> It was in Manchester that he ministered to a condemned man who in a fit of passion had committed murder.

a law to himself, or better, he exemplified the truth that love is the fulfilment of all law.

#### ONE WITH THE REDEEMER

‘Have you ever observed—of course you have—how an old familiar truth may suddenly present itself to you with as much freshness as if it were quite new? As a Methodist I have never dealt much with the favourite Keswick doctrine of the sinner’s identification with Christ in His death and resurrection. But on Good Friday I preached upon it—“One died for all, therefore all died,” &c. As I was meditating on the subject, *after* I had preached, I saw, with the vividness of a lightning flash, that it was my present personal privilege to reckon myself one with Christ in His risen life. In the same moment I knew that it was real—the world, the flesh, and the devil under my feet. I could have shouted for joy. The blessed freedom and the near access to God through Christ remain with me still. I suppose that my experience was somewhat similar to that of Dr. Dale when he had as clear a perception of the truth that Christ lives. How simple is the way of faith, and how simple is faith itself! Fletcher gave prominence to this truth, though I never felt it easy to understand him, but Wesley says very little about it as the way into full salvation. Perhaps his horror of Calvinism made him shy of it.’

‘I do not think we have nearly fathomed our Lord’s meaning in all that He teaches respecting the mutual abiding union of Himself with the believer. It is because of the prominence he gives to this



theme that I like Dr. Moule. It is in the *Communion* that we fail. John Woolman, whose *Journal* I am reading again, knew something of it, though like most Friends (excepting always Rendel Harris) he thought more perhaps of the Holy Spirit than of Christ. But he never fell out of the fellowship, was always obedient to the heavenly Voice, and when speaking, never said one word more than he believed would glorify God. The result of union is fruitfulness, and the fruit of the Spirit is *love*, which will manifest itself variously in harmony with the temperament.'

#### CHRIST-CENTRED

'We should not, any of us, preach such sermons on Entire Sanctification as we once did, but the New Testament truth on the doctrine is eternal—the hearty acknowledgement of the fact that we are not our own, but bought with a price—the placing of ourselves definitely at the absolute disposal of God, that life may be lived out under His control—the believing reception of Jesus Christ as the one and only Source of life—victorious, pure, Spirit-filled life.

'I have wondered lately whether my teaching is too intensely Christ-centred. Last Sunday night ———, who kindly took my service, preached on prayer—a very good modern sermon, but from beginning to end—though he took three texts from our Lord's own words—there was not one passing reference to Him in any form, except that He prayed. I could not speak ten minutes on prayer without bringing in Christ as Mediator. I suppose



the explanation would be that this was implied or assumed.'

#### THE FULLNESS OF JESUS

'Nothing interests people more than to be told of the fullness of Christ's salvation. What I deeply feel is the need to be always in perfect *touch* with Christ, so that all the thoughts to which I give speech may be steeped in Christlike love, and that the people may be made to feel that we are not describing a far-away ideal life, but something which is very reasonable and *practicable* for Christians in all circumstances. There are some who, when a preacher begins to speak of the Spirit-filled life, put the subject away from them at once, in accordance with old habits of thought and feeling, induced, in too many instances, by the way in which the subject has been presented to them.'

#### BACK TO CHRIST

'I am reading Principal Fairbairn's *Christ in Modern Theology*, which my brother gave me for a Christmas present, a capital book, but broader than R. W. Dale. "Back to Christ" is its motto or refrain. I do not know how it may be with you, but I find in myself a growing tendency to read the Gospels in preference to other parts of the New Testament, and Lives of Christ rather than books on systematic theology; though I can see it to be unsound and dangerous to give a secondary place to the Epistles, and can see also that the cry of "the living Christ" in some men's mouths is

a device to conceal their unbelief of Christian doctrine.'

## OUR LORD'S PRESENCE

'You appear to be possessed just now with the thought of the Living Saviour. It goes without saying that you have no sympathy with the growing modern school of theologians who assert that the living Christ is an idealized, deified Jesus, who has never had any existence but in the imagination of St. Paul and his followers. On the other hand, I heard S—— H—— say in a Southport pulpit, "Do not trouble about the historical Jesus or the evidences of Christianity. Make much of the living Saviour," or words to that effect. And I have observed something of the same tendency in some of our own men. It relieves them from the obligation to believe in the miraculous. But who is the living Saviour? What is He? And what do we know about Him beyond what we learn of the historical Jesus of the Gospels—the Jesus of the Incarnation, the miracles, the atoning death, the resurrection, the ascension?

I think I can say that He never was so precious to me as now. But my predominant thought is of His atoning death.

O Love ! Thou bottomless abyss,  
My sins are swallowed up in Thee.

God was in Christ reconciling *me* to Himself. Why are men so unwilling to be reconciled to God?'

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE KESWICK CONVENTION

Leading in Prayer—The Fullness of the Spirit—One Day's Services—Questionable Teaching—Among the Speakers—Souls Set Free—One of the Leaders—The Presence of God—A Glance Backward.

KESWICK needs no explanation to the readers of these pages. For nearly thirty years its gatherings have grown in power, its influence reaching to the farthest corners of the earth. The writer was present at the Oxford Meeting in 1874, when Canon Battersby (of blessed memory) received his great blessing and bore testimony to his new-found experience of perfect rest in Christ. He was the father of the Keswick Convention. Perhaps it was through fear of Methodist teaching that it was some time before John Brash was admitted into the circle of Keswick speakers.

The truth and experience were substantially the same. The differences were largely in phraseology. Once his teaching was known, John Brash was given a prominent place, not only at Keswick but in smaller Conventions all over the land. To read his descriptions is like spending a week amid the holy influences of these great assemblies, since their account is written from the view-point of one of the speakers. This year's Report (1912), contains evidence that the

Convention has lost none of its influence. These extracts are not arranged in chronological order.

#### LEADING IN PRAYER

‘ I saw on my arrival that I had to preach twice yesterday. We had capital congregations, and very blessed times. The Master was very manifestly present, so I closed the day tired but very thankful.

‘ Like some eight or nine others of the Convention men, I have no speaking appointment, but am down to pray in the big tent every day of the week. I feel the responsibility of this more than I should feel that of an address. Such a sea of faces ! It is a solemn thing to lead the devotions of so great a mass of people, especially for a man like myself, to whom the lack of gift for public prayer has been a lifelong trouble. It is comforting to know that my voice carries. We had a big preparatory prayer-meeting in the tent this forenoon at ten.’

#### THE FULLNESS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

‘ It is not easy, while here, to tell you much about the Convention. The crowds are enormous. The biggest meetings are at 7 a.m. and 6.30 p.m. I had to give the address yesterday morning. The sight of the great sea of faces (the tent, so much larger than that at Southport, being full), was rather appalling, but the Lord kept me quite calm and still before Him, and all went well. I have never had so many thanks for an address in all my life. It was quite commonplace. I felt I must have something very familiar, and set in order two or three thoughts

on "Be filled with the Spirit." We heard much of the need of being filled—of the conditions of the results in Christian work. If there was any part of the field less trodden than the others it was that which dealt with the *subjective effects*, the personal experience, what comes into our heart with the fullness of the Spirit? It helped me to refer to mistakes and false expectations, leading to disappointment and discouragement. The surprise to me is that so many ministers seem to have been enlightened and helped. Possibly a subject that has been in one's mind for many years has led to a maturity of thought of which one is scarcely conscious. Anyhow, I am more grateful to God than I can say to have been enabled to give a useful message to so many earnest people.'

#### ONE DAY'S SERVICES

'This morning the united Communion service was held in the church. I should have been glad to go, but had to offer the opening prayer in the tent, so could not. About 200 were there. We in the tent had a most charming address from F. B. Meyer on Heb. xii. 1, 2—the best I have heard from him.

'The least numerous attendance, though the tent is fairly full, is at the "General Meeting" at 11.45 a.m. One reason is that there is going on at the same time the Ministers' Meeting, Ladies' Meeting, Girls' Meeting, Young Men's Meeting; but the people don't seem to like four addresses of fifteen minutes each. I think the scheme has been devised to get in some of the men.

'There are about 400 daily at the Ministers'

Meeting. I went on Tuesday morning, and F. B. Meyer, who was in the chair, asked me to offer the opening prayer, which was more than I had bargained for.

‘The social life here is extraordinary. At one meal we had English, Scotch, Irish, French, Swedish, Russian, German. I took in a Swedish lady, and had a very interesting conversation with her.

‘Webster and Soltau are splendid chorus-singers, and we have them without end.

‘There are lots of Methodists, who seem to be glad to come and claim cousinship with me. The only approach to a cheer I have heard—subdued and brief—was when the Bishop of Sierra Leone said that he had more than once preached in *Wesleyan* chapels, and hoped to do so again.

‘At 11.15 and 6.30 the Tent and Pavilion are full to the doors, and there is an overflow meeting at the Drill Hall. I have been once, and may have to go again. The new strong man is Dr. John Smith of Edinburgh. The prayers are always refreshing—so simple and unconventional.’

#### QUESTIONABLE TEACHING

‘One night at Keswick, on coming from the Pavilion, I heard that ———— had said that a Christian believer might choose for himself whether he would live the old life or the new; and that ———— had followed with teaching which did not harmonize with this. At the speakers’ prayer-meeting next morning several prayed for any who might have been mystified by what they had heard. I could scarcely believe that ———— had made

such a statement without some qualification. But he repeated it on Friday night, saying that the saints in heaven lived only the new life, and the ungodly on earth only the old, and that God's people on earth might live one or the other. I shall look out for the report of his speech. I fear that some of them attach no idea to justification beyond that of deliverance from the guilt of sin—from the penalty of sin. I have heard ———— speak of our *standing* as altogether distinct from any conscious spiritual life. The difficulty to me is that they never say how a man is to know his standing.'

#### AMONG THE SPEAKERS

'We were a lively company at table. ————, formerly of the Church Army, is brim full of choruses, so is ————. They would break out in the middle of a meal or any time, "What, never thirst again?" or "My Jesus, I love Thee," or "Grace there is," &c. Then our host, after every doxology and every thanksgiving, would have always—always—"Above the rest this note shall swell," &c. Literally, we sang it dozens of times. Then Dr. ———— would strike off "Hallelujah, 'tis done!" He is delightful company. We were all very happy last night, and yet there was something solemn in our circumstances. Next day Dr. and Mrs. P—— were sailing for New York. Webster, Inwood and Sloan were about to leave for Canada as a Keswick deputation. Gelson Gregson was going on a mission to the Syrian Christians in Travancore, and Selwyn, in October, on a Church mission tour in India, and Miss H. bury back to work in China. So we stood up, joined



hands all round and sang, "All hail the power of Jesu's name," then a chorus, and another, and another; then Dr. P——, with moisture in his eye said, "Once more, Above the rest." Then somebody asked him to pronounce the Benediction. By that time it was eleven o'clock. I told Dr. P——, that he would wake up in his berth with the echo of "Above the rest" in his ears or his heart. He said he should.

'But I was charmed most of all with Dr. Moule. We had two conversations, once in a walk together, having met by accident, and once at the dinner-table where he devoted himself chiefly to me. We might have been friends of twenty years' standing. I think he must have known something of my name. He is a very easy, fluent speaker, not perhaps so well adapted for novices as for mature Christians.

'Mr. Wilson asked very pathetically at one of the speakers' prayer-meetings that the speakers would remember the babes in Christ. He said, "You give to them the last new thought that has come to you in your advanced life, forgetting how much elementary instruction the people need." At the last meeting in the tent, when Dr. Moule and E. H. Hopkins were to speak, he read a few verses of John xxi, and paused, and said, "I do hope these two dear brethren will feed the lambs to-night."

'Hopkins asked for lifted hands. Not a very large number went up, but he was very definite and did not press. There was a solemn influence, and I think that those who responded meant it. *The* time was on Thursday night, when F. B. Meyer spoke on Zech. iii. The grandest of all, as I think, was the young men's meeting in the Pavilion.'

## SOULS SET FREE

‘After the Monday night meeting at Keswick there came to speak to me a lady who was the picture of despair. She told me she had come from the South of France, a four days’ journey, in the hope that she might find deliverance from a burden that was crushing her. She thought that she had committed the sin of Heb. vi. My heart always sinks within me when people come to me in that trouble, because I know how often it means nervous disease. I did my best to help her. On Wednesday night I saw her again, but she was still troubled. On Thursday forenoon she was condemned to the overflow meeting in the Drill Hall. I was the only speaker, and, the company being comparatively small, I had an easy, happy time. At the close I found her radiant—her burden gone, and her heart at rest. I spoke to her on Saturday morning, and she told me she was going home rejoicing.

‘Another lady who got a great blessing at the same meeting said to me, “Let me show you part of a letter I received from my husband this morning.” It was something to this effect: “Do try to hear dear Brash. I believe he is at the Convention. I got such a blessing under him at Littlehampton.” She too had been crowded out of the tent, and came to the Drill Hall not knowing what she might find. Her husband was a Dr. B——. I know nothing of him. Probably he came into the Littlehampton meetings from the outside. I am sure God gives His servants messages, and then arranges, by His providence, that troubled inquiring souls shall receive them. How important to listen to God’s

voice and to be obedient, heedless of personal reputation.'

#### ONE OF THE LEADERS

'The big gun of the Convention was Dr. John Smith, of Edinburgh—a short, thick-set man. He has great mental grip. He has good thoughts, and talks them out with considerable energy. Now and then he stops abruptly, bangs his Bible on the table, draws his hand across his forehead, and restates, perhaps illustrates, what he has been trying to say, and usually makes it plain. One of his Edinburgh admirers told me that he needs a full hour, requiring half that time to get fairly into his subject. His great address was at a night meeting in the tent; his theme, "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." It took me some time to find what he was driving at. At last I saw. The Christian conquers the world *for Christ*. Money is of the world, but George Müller conquered it by faith and prayer, and compelled men to make it subservient to Christ's compassion for the orphan. I think he meant to show how in the same way literature, art, governmental power, were to be conquered and carried captive for Christ; but the Chairman had to tell him that he had exceeded his time. He had spoken forty minutes. So he came to a hurried conclusion. I carefully watched the people, and observed that while a few were interested and pleased, a much greater number—conventional in a double sense—were tired. The address did not harmonize with their sense of fitness. I myself thought that the whole style of it was more suited for a popular

platform (though I have no doubt it was his ordinary pulpit manner) than for a devotional meeting.'

#### THE PRESENCE OF GOD

' A new tent, as large as the old one, seating 3,000, and in addition to it, was opened yesterday, with a very simple and beautiful dedicatory service, at which Hopkins, Elder Cumming, and Inwood spoke, each briefly and well. What I chiefly felt throughout the service was the presence of God.

' There is no special "draw" this year. Dr. Pierson is not here, nor is Dr. Moule. Inwood, decidedly the strongest man, being on the Irish deputation to our own Conference, leaves to-day. F. B. Meyer comes to-night and leaves on Wednesday for Palestine. But there is great expectation. There has been in London a series of remarkable prayer-meetings organized by the Council for special spiritual blessing ; and faith is strong.

' I gave the address at the 7 a.m. meeting yesterday. The meeting was quiet, but one had a pleasant feeling of homeliness, and I was glad to hear others name the same thing. I read the first morning lesson in church, where there was a great crowd. A special seat was assigned to me. There was nothing remarkable about this, as any layman may read the lessons, but it showed a friendly feeling, seeing that clergymen were there by scores. Hopkins, who preached, told me afterwards how pleased he was.'

#### A GLANCE BACKWARD

' I returned home from Keswick on Saturday with a very thankful heart, feeling that everything had

gone well, and that it had been a good Convention. I doubt whether the speaking, as a whole, was up to that of former years in its intellectual quality, but from the first there was a spirit of hopefulness and intense earnestness, and I feel sure that great numbers of people found the deliverance and blessing they were seeking.

‘S——— and I had to speak together on Thursday afternoon—at the excursionists’ meeting. The tent was about full, though many of the regular Convention people were at the missionary meeting on the lake.

‘I was strongly tempted to fall back on some more familiar subject, but I thought it might be reported in the papers. There were people present from all parts of the Kingdom, and it was scarcely possible to give an old address that had not been heard by some. The Keswick men are, however, quite unscrupulous in this matter. Sargeant gave a twenty minutes’ Bible-reading at the morning prayer-meeting from Eph. i, which made a deep impression. He gripped his audience and had close, earnest attention. The time was gone before he had finished, so I asked the Chairman to let me off. But he was not willing. I told the people that if they would be quiet for twenty minutes I would finish with that time. There was a pleasant response on their faces, and I had a happy time. I gave the substance of a talk on “Ye are the light of the world,” that I prepared for a Southport meeting one forenoon when you were in the chair, and had never looked at, or thought of since, until a week ago.

‘The attendance at the morning prayer-meetings

was larger than ever. There must have been 1,500 present each day. At the thanksgiving meeting there were over 2,000. This was Saturday morning. The requests for praise numbered over 200, and were presented by Webb-Peploe, Evan Hopkins, Dr. George Wilson, of Edinburgh, and myself. I had to lead in prayer all over the place throughout the week, sometimes quite unexpectedly; and mostly, not always, had liberty. The best time was at the ministers' meeting one forenoon. Evan Hopkins in the chair. Speakers, Dr. John Smith and E. W. Moore.

'I heard of a very wonderful ministers' meeting on the Friday, when Dr. George Wilson and the Bishop of Mombasa were the speakers. The men were broken down and weeping in all directions. The average attendance at this meeting was about 300. There must have been 400 to 500 at the Convention, besides 350 lay missionaries, male and female, who were provided for by the Committee.

'The Bishop is a beautiful character. He gave us his testimony in the tent (and did it more fully, I believe, at the ministers' meeting), telling us of the great blessing he received instantaneously after ten years of barren labour. The large audience was much moved. At the Chairman's request he commended us Canadians to God in prayer—and did it very tenderly and beautifully, afterwards shaking hands with me, and wishing me a very happy time.

#### ' A THANKSGIVING MEETING

was held in the other tent, where again I had to open with prayer. It was a Methodist lovefeast;



the testimonies were very striking—all by educated people who said just what they felt in the simplest way, and stopped when they had done. Among them were Germans, and Korean missionaries. A lady from Korea said she had never been but at one Convention before, and that it was in that country—1,300 Korean Christians, all sitting on the floor.'

The 'Keswick' ministry reached over the eighteen years of his supernumerary life—a ministry as fruitful as that of his most active days. If it is remembered that in his visits to Kingsdown (Dublin) Convention he gave in all nearly thirty addresses, an idea will be gained of the greatness of his Convention work.



## CHAPTER IX

### THE CANADIAN DEPUTATION, 1901

London, Ontario—A Fine City—Toronto—An Interesting Journey—Ottawa—Montreal—The Climate of Canada.

#### LONDON, ONTARIO

*'Sept. 16, 1901.*

'Last week we kept three Conventions going, twenty miles away from each other, each of us in turn attending them all. A great thunderstorm seriously interfered with the meetings on Thursday night, but upon the whole the attendance has been large, and the people kind. God gives us great freedom. At Galt, the public testimony of a Presbyterian minister overwhelmed me with gratitude. Moffat and Webster, each in his own line, speak with great power, and blessing attends us.

'Yesterday I preached here. The morning service was in a church seating 1,000, the evening in one seating 1,800, both practically full. The congregations, which, so far as I know, are average, astonish me. The churches, so far, are not Gothic, and are well built for speaking and hearing, being square or semi-circular, with deep galleries. The sight last night was very inspiring, almost overwhelming. I cut out of the Saturday papers the musical programmes of the two services, but, unfortunately, have lost them. You would have opened

your eyes. I wondered where the sermon was to come in. I found, however, that they tolerate about twenty-five minutes, if a man would not be tedious. On both occasions the congregations were very responsive. After the morning service I dined with the Methodist minister. His wife said, "Mr. Brash, I expected you to preach a sermon on entire sanctification." I said, "Well, didn't I?" (Matt. v. 8). She had evidently looked for a sermon on the old lines. What entire sanctification is not—What it is—&c., and was pleasantly surprised to hear it put in another form. On my leaving she told me she had received a great blessing.

'After the evening service we held a prayer-meeting, the minister saying it was the best he had seen. He told the people that it was many a month since he had felt so much of the presence and the power of Christ. He is a very fine man, living, I believe, in the light of full salvation.

'The night services are embarrassing. I cannot preach my best sermons. To address believers only would be to lose a valuable opportunity, while to preach to the unsaved only would be a disappointment. So I have to combine the two. "What shall I do then with Jesus?" was my last night's theme. This week is to be about the same as last. From Wednesday night we shall keep three Conventions going—then on Saturday we shall go to Toronto.

#### OLD FRIENDS

'I am constantly meeting with Liverpool people. At Hamilton a Batley man and woman

spoke to me. After I had left Brantford an Oakworth man, who had been converted under my ministry, came in from the country and was bitterly disappointed to have missed me. I, too, am sorry. Last night a Manitoba minister came into the vestry to tell me he had heard me several times in Southport. The world is not so big.

‘It would take sheets of paper to give you an idea of the beauty of these Canadian cities. This is called ‘The Forest city’—very appropriately. In the residential parts you can scarcely see any houses for the trees. The shopping streets are wide, handsome, and very showy in respect of the shop windows.

‘I now know the worst of it all, and cannot tell you how thankful I am to find that my physical strength is equal to the strain. I feel absolutely no effects in any form of yesterday’s work, and am as fresh, in voice and every other way, as if I had done nothing at all. Mr. Moffat, who is quite a strong man, does not stand it nearly so well. Yesterday he had to go to have his throat touched by a specialist.

‘Every town has its two or three newspapers, and they give columns to “The Keswick Brethren.” I don’t find the reports very interesting, and never read them through.’

TORONTO

‘Sept. 22, 1901.

‘We kept three meetings going last week, as the week before. I spoke at them all, sometimes alone, and sometimes with a colleague. The gatherings were for the most part large, and we have exceedingly

good meetings. We are received with great cordiality both by ministers and people. There are some ministers, I believe, who refuse to have anything to do with us, but they do not come in our way. At Guelph, a picturesque manufacturing city, I spoke on Friday night to a large church full of people upon "Be filled with the Spirit." The pastor of the church (a Presbyterian) was good enough to tell the Methodist minister that he had never read and never heard anything on the subject that had made it so clear to him. This encouraged me. Everywhere the people express themselves as grateful for the help they receive. But while I am open to temptation in some directions as other men I don't think I am in a bit of danger from self-conceit. Everything I have seen of our own ministers here, and everything I have heard from them in prayer, &c., convinces me that they are far and away my superiors in every way. I may have a more distinct message on one subject, but I have never yet preached without feeling that the people had in the pulpit a man inferior to their own. Most are University graduates. Dr. Johnston, a Presbyterian minister in London, who entertained me during my stay there, and who has heard a good many preachers in England and Scotland, told me that the average preaching was, in his opinion, greater here than in our own country, and I find it quite easy to believe that he is right.

'I have preached in four churches, two of them seating 1,000 each, one 1,800 to 2,000, the largest of all, the "Metropolitan," last night. It was built for Dr. Punshon, and is a splendid pile, occupying an entire "block"—that is, there is a street on

each of its four sides. There was an immense crowd, and at first I felt rather appalled, but God soon gave me possession of myself, and I preached with comfort. My voice has been unusually good all the way, so far. Both my colleagues are complaining of their throats, but mine stands the strain in a remarkable way. My Sunday night sermons are my plague. Representing Keswick, I am bound to preach full salvation to believers, but when I see such a miscellaneous gathering, I cannot overlook the unconverted. So my sermons have a more patchwork character than when I am at home.'

#### A FINE CITY

'This is a fine city. Very wide streets, and trees, trees everywhere. You look down straight streets miles long—roads we should call them, and all you see is a double avenue of trees, and green grass on each side. Each villa stands far back in ample grounds of its own, the result being that each city covers a very large area in proportion to its population. The impression made upon you is that of *plenty of room*. A college must have a park, and so with every public building. Yonge Street, the principal street of Toronto, is forty miles long! Of course, there are not villas all the way, but I am told that it is called Yonge Street all the way to Lake Simco, more than forty miles away. The Yonge Street tramcars run twenty-eight miles in a straight line.

'To-morrow morning at half-past ten we have a ministers' meeting, the sort of meeting that I dread most of all, though so far, the ministers are

exceedingly cordial. The Association Hall here is a miserably bad place to speak in. The look of it suggests that the architect said to himself, "How can I construct a hall in which there shall be a great echo?" It was not full to-night. It is said that Methodists come largely, and Monday is the Epworth League night, keeping away the young people. I had a good time and a very attentive and responsive audience while speaking. We had a little prayer together in the afternoon, and I was constrained to ask that we might be saved from staleness—that we might be in such close touch with the Divine Master that the familiar truths might retain their freshness to ourselves. But that is a prayer to be offered by all religious teachers, always.'

## OTTAWA

*'Sept. 30.*

'I did not think the Convention at Toronto specially good. It was held in the largest hall, with a most tormenting echo. The friends with whom Webster stayed told him that they heard me perfectly, my voice being, as they said, "soft"—himself, middling—as for Moffat, they had not heard an entire sentence through all the Convention. This was a drawback. We did not attract the young people. On the other hand it is said that there were never so many ministers present, or so many substantial people, office bearers in the various churches. Certainly I never in my life had so many personal thanks from ministers. It was not the week the committee had chosen, and our best friends had important meetings which they could



not forgo, but the committee were unanimous in their testimony that it had been a very good Convention.

#### AN INTERESTING JOURNEY

‘ We had an interesting journey on Saturday, passing through miles of virgin forest, with here and there a little clearing, showing a few cornstooks among the tree stumps, or a small haystack or two, or half a dozen cows, and upon one side of it a wooden house, sometimes a mere shanty, but more frequently a pretty villa with two or three gables, and ornamental verandahs, and a flower garden. Here and there amid less recent reclamations were pretty towns well laid out, the houses mostly of wood, the people quite respectable-looking, the children far more handsomely and fashionably dressed than the average of children in an English country town. Even in the largest cities of Canada there are no slums. We did not pass through any pine forests, but maple, endless maple, the leaves of which are just beginning to turn to yellow, and scarlet, and rich crimson, presenting a very lovely sight. Now and then we came to large sheets of water as large, and almost as pretty, as some of the English lakes. They are not marked upon the maps, but if they were in our country there would be cheap trips to them every Saturday.

‘ This being the Metropolis of Canada, civil servants are numerous. I am staying with one, a good Methodist. He has five daughters, three of them high-school teachers, the other two going to school. The Houses of Parliament and Government



are very fine, and the people rather proud, and disposed to look down on provincials.

'Yesterday morning I preached in the Dominion Methodist Church, said to be the largest church in Canada. I judge it to be of about the same capacity as the largest in other cities. It is quite easy to speak in, the pews above and below being in a semi-circle. At night I was thankful to be in a snug place seating 500. It rained in torrents all day, and the congregations were thinned, but we had a very happy and well-attended after-meeting.'

## MONTREAL

'Oct. 9, 1901.

'We are having very large meetings here. A capacious church (Presbyterian) is more than half full in afternoons, and quite full in the evening. God gave me freedom, and I think power last night. I have been led, week by week, to be more and more definite—elementary, if you like, and to fall back upon addresses which tell all the truth so far as I am able to tell it in one half-hour. Moffat is somewhat more *set* and mechanical in his methods, and does not quite agree with mine. He thinks that the first two or three meetings ought to be devoted to searchings, without any specific reference to the teaching that is to follow. There is something to be said for it, especially when people know beforehand what our doctrine is. My disposition is rather to begin with a clear bold statement of Christian privilege, believing that as the people compare the life we present to them with the life they are living, the Spirit will do some searching. When we have shown them the possibilities

of the Christian life, and the point to which we seek to bring them, and have inspired them with hope, then is the time to deal with the imperative conditions. I think it may be assumed that in all Conventions there are people who are already longing for a better and more spiritual life, and my sympathies are with them.

‘This is a large city—close upon 400,000—with splendid buildings. At least two-thirds of the population is French. There are French newspapers, French placards on the walls, and French names of streets in some parts. I think I have at last seen the largest Methodist church in Canada, perhaps the largest in the world—St. James’s. It cost more than £100,000 to build, and so far as I can learn there is upon it more than half that amount of debt. The trustees have to borrow money to pay the interest, so matters are getting worse. If it could be cleared it would make the finest and probably the most successful mission in all Methodism. It seats 2,500. Mr. Manning, for whom I preached at Dominion Square Church in the morning, was sorry that Mr. Bland, who had charge of the arrangements, and who secured me for his own place at night, had not asked for me to preach at St. James’s. As it was, I had the best Sunday since coming to Canada. The congregations were said to be the most wealthy and influential, but they were very responsive, and God was manifestly present.

‘I begin to understand better than I ever did something you said in one of your letters about ———, I should like not to be a missionary of any sort. It is better to be a pastor, where you can deal with Bible truth all round. It is not good for a

man to be always speaking on the same specific subjects, still less good to be always preaching the same sermons. It will be a miracle if he does not become mechanical. Though D. L. Moody, who confessed to F. B. Meyer that there was not a preacher in the world who did so large a business on so small a capital, never lost his freshness.

‘Yesterday I met a minister from Nova Scotia, who told me that he had read every number of *The King’s Highway* from its first appearance in 1871 or 1872 to the last. He thought its death a lamentable thing. He felt as if I were an old friend.

‘There were three people I knew in my Sunday night congregation, two from Batley and one from Gravel Lane. The Batley man, when he saw that I recognized him, seemed scarcely able to contain himself. I think he is one of my children.’

#### THE CLIMATE OF CANADA

‘The climate here is about the same as in England. I mean just now. The thermometer during the day ranges from 45 degrees to 65 degrees. The nights are often rather frosty. But the cold does not appear to be the same as at home. Then the Canadians make provision for it. If it is the least chilly they light the stove—furnace they call it—and in a short time there is hot air or hot water in the hall, on the landing, in every part of the house from bottom to top. You see everywhere groups of ornamental upright pipes. Those in my bedroom are warm day and night. My host—a hearty Methodist—who lives in a good, but not a large house, tells me that he burns fourteen tons of coal

annually, all the cooking being done by gas, the bill for which is heavy. The house is lit up, like all the rest, with electric light. There are stoves in all the tramcars, very many of which are very long, like Pullmans.

‘ I have not yet met an Englishman who does not say that the winter is more pleasant and much more easily borne than in England, though the thermometer is often 10 to 20 degrees below zero. Another thing that they all combine to tell me is that people never take cold here as in England. This must be, I suppose, owing to the dryness of the atmosphere. But all Canadians are very sore about what the English say of their climate, and this may lead to some exaggeration. They say that emigrants are frightened away to the United States.

‘ On Saturday, if all be well, we go to Northfield, and on Wednesday start for home, so you will not receive another letter from this side. It has been a very pleasant tour, and the kindness of the good folks of all denominations has been most marked. Last night as I was leaving the vestry for the platform, a Church of England clergyman, who, I think, had been much moved at the meeting of ministers, put his hand on my shoulder, and offered such a touching prayer that God would help me in speaking. But I shall heave a sigh of relief when I find myself aboard the steamer and my face towards home.’

## CHAPTER X

### THE HOLY SPIRIT OF GOD

The Holy Spirit and Power—The Place and Work of the Holy Spirit—The Holy Spirit Christ's Spirit—The Baptism of the Holy Spirit—Filled with the Spirit—Recognizing the Holy Spirit—The Gift of God—The Spirit's Witness—The Holy Spirit the Christ-consciousness—The Two Comings of the Holy Spirit.

RUNNING like a golden thread through this long correspondence is the thought of the Paraclete ; and John Brash remarks in one letter that he was solicitous that one address at every Convention at least should be devoted to Him whom John Howe called ' that great Plenipotentiary, the Holy Ghost.' Once a minister in active work wrote to one of the friends on this great subject ; the answer sent to him gave the judgement of both. The closing pages of this chapter consist of an article from *The King's Highway*.

### THE HOLY SPIRIT AND POWER

' It is always refreshing to read of those wonderful times of blessing recorded in the early chapters of Acts, and, of course, it is never out of place. But of late years my attention has been increasingly drawn to the teaching of the Epistles. In the spirit in which many Christians seek " the baptism of power," there is something very much like bargaining. They

are probably not conscious of it, but it is there. They will yield themselves fully to God on the understanding that they get "power" in return. But New Testament writers exhort us to a present, a full surrender of ourselves to God that He may fill us with Himself, because it is right, because we are not our own, because our failure to do this grieves Him and hinders His fulfilment in us of the purpose for which Christ died.

'They say very little about the obligation of Christians to win souls. It cannot have been because the subject was absent from their minds. It must have been that they knew that the extension of the Kingdom would follow inevitably where Christians lived and walked in the Spirit.

'What I feel is that there is a danger of falling into the habit of speaking so much of holiness as a means to an end, and that end personal visible success, as to lower the tone of our teaching.

'I fully agree with you about "self-centred holiness." It is another form of the same evil. It makes more of an *experience* than of God's claim. True holiness is centred in the will of God: "Put me to what Thou wilt, rank me with whom Thou wilt," &c.

'Personally, I never—while insisting on all this—forget Wesley's counsel about "drawing rather than driving." "I beseech you—by the *mercies* of God."

#### THE PLACE AND WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

'I doubt whether general talk about an outpouring of the Holy Spirit leads to anything. With the



exception of the very brief period of church history written in the early chapters of Acts, the Holy Spirit is never referred to in the New Testament but in connexion with some specific office, or work, or fruit. What is needed is that Christians will yield themselves to God to be made holy. So far as I remember, St. Paul makes no distinction between holiness and the fullness of the Spirit. Nor did Wesley or the early Methodist preachers. It was not that they denied the distinction, but that the idea never occurred to them. Bramwell did, but he does not seem to have laid much stress upon it. I am speaking purely from memory, but the distinction was not made, I think, by Hester Ann Rogers, John Smith, David Stoner, or John Henley. Mary Cryer expresses a belief somewhere that God is pleased to give a preacher now and then what she calls "a baptism of usefulness." She does not believe it is meant to be continuous. But I feel myself to be a mere child in these matters, and never in my life was less disposed to dogmatize. All I feel is that what is wanted in our churches is holiness of heart and life. When we have fully saved men and women, uniting in prayer for the conversion of sinners, the blessing will come. I have no doubt that if you continue to wait quietly upon God you will be rightly led. Sometimes God does great things by laying a burden upon one man, as in the case of Lanfear and the church in New York.'

#### THE HOLY SPIRIT CHRIST'S SPIRIT

'Of one thing I am resolved: I will study more closely the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. I am



sometimes a little pained by the way in which Christ is ignored in the exhortations to be filled with the Spirit. I was constrained to say a little yesterday on what seems to me to be the truth, that the Spirit's work in the heart is just as really *Christ's* work. M——, the chairman, told me afterwards that he fully agreed with me. Most Scotchmen do. It frets them to hear what some of the brethren say. Something of this kind has been passing through my mind: The Holy Spirit is "the Spirit of Christ," and is so designated by both St. Paul and St. Peter. He is so because (1) He is sent by Christ. "*He* hath shed forth this." Even when the Father sends Him it is in "the name" of Christ, or in answer to the prayer of Christ. The promise of the Father is to Christ; (2) He reveals Christ in the Scriptures—prophecies (St. Peter) "searching what," &c. By illumination through the word; (3) It is by Him that Christ is formed in us. What is the effect of being filled with the Spirit? Let Paul—a Spirit-filled man answer—The "love of Christ constraineth us." Christ's own love, &c., &c. This is all ends, but I must think it out.

'The late Dr. John Smith often joined himself to me for walks and talks at Keswick. One day he was rather distressed because of an address he had heard on the baptism of the Holy Ghost, in which the work of the Holy Spirit was dealt with so exclusively as entirely to ignore both the Father and the Son. The doctor felt that if that was Keswick teaching he could not identify himself with it. I gave him my views, when he exclaimed, with almost passionate earnestness, "I am so glad to hear you say that."'

## THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

That what follows may be understood, a paragraph must be given from the article to which reference is made.

‘ It must be borne in mind that the blessed Spirit, in communicating Himself, is not confined to one method ; not even to the method of His operation in apostolic times. For He ever lives, and is a personal Will. He deals in perfect wisdom with each man according to his personality. Hence no one man’s experience is a model for all other men. “ Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit, . . . and there are diversities of workings, but the same God, who worketh all things in all ” (1 Cor. xii. 4-6). According to a man’s temperament and work is the manifestation of the Spirit within his soul. One receiving the grace sinks into deeper quiet ; another is filled with rapture. The service also is different. One man is qualified by the gift to become a successful evangelist, another (many others) for ordinary holy living in home and business duties.

‘ When the gift is bestowed to qualify a man or woman for special service, it does seem necessary that the experience should approach the extraordinary. Gideon said of his fleece : “ If the dew be on the fleece only, and it be dry upon all the earth beside, then shall I know that Thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as Thou hast said ” (Judges vi. 37). On the other hand, if a man depends exclusively upon an extraordinary experience, it will subside into a memory, glorious indeed—yet a memory. If the evidence of the baptism lies in a

renewal of the will, so that the Christian can always affirm, "I do welcome the Holy Spirit to take full possession; I believe Christ fulfils His promise, and holds the fort for Himself"—he will thus be saved from all uncertainty. Surely the indwelling of God's Spirit guarantees perfect humility!

'So far as I am able to judge, you are right in your paper on the difficult question of the baptism of the Holy Ghost, especially in what you say about His dealing with each man according to his personality. If a Christian will be honest with Jesus Christ, yielding himself fully to his Saviour and trusting Him for all He has to give, He will take care of His own work. There is no instance in the New Testament of a believer *professing* to be filled with the Spirit. Men say it of each other, but no man ever says it of himself. Why then need any one do this in these days? I don't think the fullness of the Spirit is *ever* anything that a man can look in upon, and be conscious of, and rejoice over. It is a revelation of Christ, carrying the believer out of himself in love to his Lord and all for whom He died. "The love of Christ constraineth us"—that is the fullness of the Spirit. Wesley never made any distinction between entire sanctification and the fullness of the Spirit. It was not that after consideration he came to the conclusion that they were the same, but that it never seemed to occur to him that they could be distinct. He never exhorted any of his hearers or correspondents to seek another gift, and surely many of them were filled with the Holy Ghost. Hester Ann Rogers was certainly filled, but all you find in her life is intense love to Christ, and to men for Christ's sake. But

this is all commonplace to you. What I mean is that more and more I place the emphasis on *Jesus Christ* the living Saviour. "The promise of the Father" was a promise made not to believers but to Christ (Acts ii. 35), "He hath shed forth this." And it is from Christ that we receive.

'There is often error lurking in the phrase "power for service," selfishness—unconscious it may be, but real—so much surrender for so much success in work. Witnessing for Christ includes so much more than what we call work.

'The poor woman you describe not only may be, but *needs to be*, filled with the Spirit, or she cannot be Christ's faithful witness in her home.

'Speaking personally, there are times in the pulpit when I *know* that Christ has full possession of me and is using me. And I ask no more. It was so at Templar Hall on Sunday night. We had fully twice as many as usual to the Lord's Supper, and I heard people speaking—in modern parlance—of a "grand service," a "splendid service." Every one felt that Christ was present in a special manner.'

. . . . .

'I agree with what you have written, though I seem to have fallen into another way of putting the subject. I hardly ought to say "another way." But I have shifted the accent. The Holy Spirit is so intimately associated with Jesus Christ that I can hardly separate the two, even in thought. When I have the knowledge that *all* is yielded to Christ, and that He possesses all, to be used for Himself, I ask for no more, except, of course, increasing intensity of the love of Christ which constraineth us. I do not

see what sort of consciousness of the Holy Spirit any one can have, emotional or otherwise, except in personal love and devotion to Jesus Christ.'

#### FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

'Miss C——'s letter impresses me greatly. Here is exactly what I should describe as "a Spirit-filled life." That burden of souls, becoming so heavy that the only thing to do is to lie at God's feet—that entire willingness for them to be saved by any instrumentality that God may choose, are to me tokens of Spirit-possession more clear than any that are to be found in personal happiness. No doubt there is "joy in the Holy Ghost," but it is joy that is consistent with "the great sorrow and unceasing pain in my heart," of which St. Paul speaks. I took this for my theme at one of the St. Clement's meetings. There is no joy so pure as that of a fully-saved believer, but it is a chastened joy always.

'There is something in what you say about the "wider submissiveness," but is there not danger in the direction of quietism? Not all that comes to us in the order of God's providence is to be passively accepted—much has to be resisted, fought against, and conquered. The men who accomplish most for God are men of strong will, sometimes amounting, in the estimation of other people, to obstinacy. Luther is an example, John Wesley another—and on a different plane, Thomas Cook. A will, first rectified, then energized by the Divine Spirit, is what makes an effective man. But you will probably reply that all this is in perfect harmony with what you said.'

## RECOGNIZING THE HOLY SPIRIT

‘ If I have to speak more than once at a Convention, I invariably give at least one address to the subject of the Holy Spirit. But I am more and more deeply impressed with the fact that Jesus Christ is the great centre of Christianity, and that the Spirit’s work is to reveal Him. If we speak so as to fill people with a vague desire and expectancy to receive something into their hearts—they don’t quite know what—we may lead them away from the truth. This prevents my saying all that I hear some men say, but I quite agree with you that the Spirit has not been sufficiently honoured in the churches, and that we have not cultivated as we ought a sense of dependence on Him. In this way He has been dishonoured and grieved, and His work restrained. All this modern sensationalism is a sad token of our loss of faith in Him.’

## -THE GIFT OF GOD

‘ Amid all these varying theories and conflicting views there is great comfort for a man like me in the remembrance that the Holy Spirit is the gift of God, and that He will certainly fill with His Spirit a surrendered, open, believing heart. There are times when I am quite sure that I speak in the power of the Spirit, though I should hesitate to say precisely what was my relation to the Spirit. I mean that I could not state it in any doctrinal form.

‘ Say what men will, it is the baptism of the Holy Ghost we want. If the people and preachers



throughout the Connexion seek and receive this, by means of the President's meetings or through other instrumentalities, we shall have a prosperous year. If they don't, there is disappointment in store for us.

' Well, each of us is responsible for *himself*. My time must, of necessity, be short. I am a miracle to myself that I keep going, but I have a longing desire that God will be pleased to use me during this year as never before. I see it to be quite possible, though there has been so much failure in my life when it was at its best.'

#### THE SPIRIT'S WITNESS

' About the baptism of the Holy Ghost of which I meant to speak in my last. So far as I can see there is no scripture warrant for expecting the "witness" in the same way as to our adoption, and I think, therefore, we ought not to use the word. But I have always maintained that when the Lord takes full possession of our hearts we certainly know it. I have often said, "Don't ask me how we know, because I cannot tell you, but we *do* know."

' On the other hand I have often read, in books and addresses by deeply taught men, that a fully consecrated man may be speaking with great power, and yet be himself unconscious of the power. The last word has never yet been said on the subject, and probably never will be in this dispensation.'

#### THE HOLY SPIRIT THE CHRIST-CONSCIOUSNESS

' Dr. Elder Cumming, in his book on *The Eternal Spirit*, speaks of Lady Maxwell, Mary Fletcher, &c.;



who had conscious communion with each of the three Persons of the Holy Trinity. Moffat believes in this, and had an address upon it which he could never give because it so flatly contradicted me—I insisted that the filling of the Spirit is a Christ-consciousness. I may observe in passing that nothing brought me so many hearty thanks from all sorts of people, ministerial and lay, as what I said on that subject. Some, including ministers, told me that it had brought them a great deliverance. I do not deny that a Christian may be led into conscious fellowship with the Holy Ghost; what I deprecate is that introspective search for Him which takes the soul's eye from Christ, and often leads to a morbid spiritual condition.'

Mr. Brash's mature thoughts on this important theme are given in an article contributed to *The King's Highway*, entitled

#### THE TWO COMINGS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

'Old Testament history presents few scenes more striking than that which was witnessed at the dedication of Solomon's temple. After years of labour, and the expenditure of millions of money, the glorious structure was finished. It was complete, and yet incomplete, for God was not in it, except as He fills heaven and earth. The priests had brought from the tabernacle the ark of the covenant, and reverently placed it under the wings of the cherubim. Sacrifices had been offered, sheep and oxen innumerable: still God was absent. But when the Levites joined in song, and "the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard

in praising and thanking the Lord . . . then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the Lord." After that Solomon fell on his knees before the altar, and spreading forth his hands toward heaven, offered earnest prayer ; and when he had finished there came to the temple what was better than a cloud, for " the FIRE came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices ; and the glory of the Lord filled the house." That Jerusalem temple, first without God, except as God is in every place, then with God in the cloud, and last of all with God in the fire, was a type. " Ye are the temple of the living God." There are millions of men whom God has made to be His temples, but in whom He does not and cannot dwell, because they do not earnestly seek His presence. There are others to whom He has come in the cloud—the cloud, but not the fire ; the Spirit of peace, but not the spirit of burning. They have the token of acceptance, and it is a token of priceless value, but not a pure ardent flame of love steadily burning in their hearts during all the waking hours of life.

' This description of temple-glories carries us forward irresistibly to another scene in Jerusalem about a thousand years afterwards. The disciples have witnessed the Lord's ascension, and in obedience to His command have returned to the upper room. He has promised to send them from heaven the abiding Comforter. They wait for the fulfilment of the promise, though with little knowledge of its meaning. From day to day they wait questioning, wondering, but believing and obeying ; and at last He comes, filling their hearts with light and love.

‘This was not the day of their conversion. Nathanael, we know, was an Israelite indeed, in whom was no guile, before he became a disciple. So, probably, were they all—Old Testament saints, accepted of God, and waiting for the consolation of Israel. And even if they were not, Jesus, on His first appearance after the resurrection, had breathed upon them, and said, “Receive ye the Holy Ghost.” Whatever their previous condition, they had been the children of God from that time; they had received peace, but not power; the breath, but not the fire.

‘Needful as was this baptism of fire to prepare the first disciples for their work, it is not less so now. The Church’s greatest sin, leading to disastrous failure, has been her toleration of the mistake that because a man is converted he has therefore all the spiritual fitness he needs to work for Christ. She has had too feeble a conviction of her dependence upon the Holy Ghost, too little faith in His power, and too much confidence in skilful organization. Now and then Christian people wake up to the recollection of their obligation to do something to save their countrymen who are without God. They form new schemes, and give large sums of money, and congratulate themselves that at last they are doing their duty. So they are, and it is to be hoped they will not stop too soon. There is great room in our towns and villages for the expenditure of wealth on Christian enterprise. But money can only provide machinery, and what is the use of machinery without power? The only power that avails for God’s work in the world is the power of the Spirit in individual believers, setting them on fire

with love to Christ and to all for whom He died.

‘Awhile ago there appeared in a religious newspaper a letter from one who signed himself “Waiting.” He was waiting for his church to find him something to do, and his intention seemed to be that if she did not, he would leave her and seek a church that would. But if, instead of waiting upon the church to find him work, he had waited upon God for the baptism of the Holy Ghost, he would not then have waited longer for anything; for he would have been ready to tell the story of Christ’s love to the first friend he met, and then to the next, and would soon have found more openings for work than he could fill. “Waiting for something to do!” Let a man wait in obedience, in earnestness, in faith, for the baptism of fire, as the disciples waited at Pentecost, and he will soon find enough to do, and his work shall abide in the day.

‘What will you do with your life, or so much of it as yet remains? Think of yourself, on the one hand, as a true temple of God, but a temple in which He dwells only as a cloud; bringing peace and love and deliverance from the dominion of sin, but little power for service and feeble influence for good, making you a poor example to the unsaved of the joy-giving, conquering power of Christianity. Think of yourself, on the other hand, as a temple into which the Holy Ghost has come in fire, warming your heart, loosening your tongue, making work for Christ a delight, and the way of the cross a way of liberty and song, giving power to all the words you speak for Him in the pulpit, or the meeting for fellowship and testimony, or the mission room, or the Sunday-school, or the social circle. But you are feeble in

health, and disqualified for active labour ; what then ? Then shall the fire within make you, if not a “ burning,” yet a shining light. There will be about you an atmosphere of purity and peace that is better felt than defined. It will be felt, not only when you are speaking on religious subjects, but always. Your friends will find themselves better for your society, scarcely knowing what it is that makes them better. This divine fire of humble love is as necessary for the exhibition of the passive as of the active graces.

‘ Which shall it be ? The cloud or the fire ? Think of the souls whose salvation may depend upon your faithfulness, think of that solemn hour “ when life is all retouched again,” think of the day when you will meet the Master, and choose.’

## CHAPTER XI

### ‘ THE KING’S HIGHWAY ’

Editor and Contributor—The Story of the Magazine—‘ Twelve Years Ago and Now ’—An Unexpected Testimony—The Soul’s Dwelling-Place.

FOR twenty-eight years this magazine maintained its position as an exponent of the teaching of John Wesley on Entire Sanctification, and throughout its course was edited by the two friends ; John Brash being acting editor for its last ten years. During this period it was an inter-denominational serial, five branches of the great Methodist Church being represented on its editorial council. Such literary work as came from John Brash appeared in its pages, and it would not be difficult to compile an interesting volume from these contributions. The earlier volumes of the magazine contained a series of sketches of eminent Christians, entitled *Shining Lights*, some of them dealing with the less-known saints of early Methodist history, as John Nelson the second, John Anderson, and John Henley, and outside that circle W. H. Hewitson, of the Free Church of Scotland, who made the notable remark, ‘ *I am better acquainted with Jesus than with any friend I have on earth.* ’ This series was followed by another, *Short Sermons from Class-meeting Texts*, in which excellent use was made of some familiar expressions. Five

articles were written on *Madame Guyon and her hymns*, and several more on *The Fruits of Holiness*. But John Brash’s best literary work was done during the period of editorship, especially in his leading articles. A writer in *The Methodist Recorder* said of his Scriptural Holiness tract :

‘ There is a little book, probably forgotten by many, entitled *Scriptural Holiness*. And there, amongst other tracts, is one by John Brash, entitled *Can it be ?* Anything more searching, stimulating, and at the same time healing and comforting to a Methodist preacher, I never read outside the Scriptures. The first reading of it will never be forgotten by me. Again and again on a devotional morning, I have reached down that little book, never without the same powerful stimulus. And even now the touch of the good man’s memory seems to renew one’s life. If all who have spoken of holiness among us had been such as he, how different would the position of the doctrine have been ; and if this doctrine had been in its right place, how many other things would have been different, too ! ’

As *The King’s Highway* entered upon its thirteenth year, he sketched its history under the title

#### TWELVE YEARS AGO AND NOW

‘ About twelve years ago there were a few men to whom it seemed that the subject of Christian holiness had a less prominent place in public teaching than in former days. The doctrine was preached, but not by many were the people taught their present obligation to be “ pure in heart,” or the possibility of an instantaneous cleansing. It was believed, however, that there were in all the churches



those who were dissatisfied with their condition; who had a conviction that something better was provided for them in the covenant, but whose ideas of what it was and how to get it were vague and indistinct. To meet the case of those who were thus hungering and thirsting after righteousness, twelve tracts, written by as many Wesleyan ministers, were issued in a monthly series. More than a hundred thousand were sold, and the set was afterwards published in a volume, entitled *Scriptural Holiness*, which also had a large circulation.

‘ The success of this experiment encouraged us to venture upon a more continuous effort. For a year or two previously there had been published a monthly magazine on the subject, but its circulation was limited. An amicable arrangement having been made with its editor, it was resolved, after much thought and prayer, to start another on a somewhat larger scale. There was a little opposition—many good men frowned, others thought they saw in it elements of mischief, while some shook their heads and predicted failure; but from the first day a blessing rested upon the enterprise. It was soon seen that in towns and villages and lonely countrysides there were earnest souls seeking to know all the will of God concerning them, that they might enter into it. Letters of inquiry and encouragement came from all quarters.

‘ Soon the difficulty was to check the disposition to form separate organizations, and to discourage all movements which tended to the formation of a “ Church within a Church,” our conviction being that it was better for those who had been led into the light to mingle as much as possible with their

Christian brethren in the ordinary means of grace, and thus diffuse the light.

‘ The next venture was to arrange, with much fear and trembling, for a public meeting during the session of the Wesleyan Conference. This, too, was found to supply a want, and the annual meeting “ for the promotion of Scriptural holiness ” is now a recognized institution, and is often the largest of the assemblies held at Conference time. Then came the great wave from America, carrying the doctrine, and the experience too, into nearly all the Evangelical churches of the land. This, from causes which need not here be named, was followed by a disastrous reaction, which happily has proved to be in some respects only temporary ; for any one who compares the current spiritual literature with that of a dozen years ago may see how much fainter is the plea for the necessity of sin in believers, and how much more clear is the apprehension of Christ as a full Saviour.

‘ We claim no more than to have contributed in our degree to the meeting of a felt need in the churches as it has arisen. That God has enabled us to do this we know from the continuous stream of testimony which comes to us. We doubt whether there is another magazine the editor and readers of which are brought into closer personal relations. The cultivation of these relations and the ministry of correspondence with troubled and perplexed souls that has been opened to us, involves labour, but it is a labour of love, and one which has often brought blessing to our own hearts. Nor have we ever been without sympathy from ministers. More than seventy of our own denomination have enriched

our pages by their contributions. The late Luke H. Wiseman, in his charge to the candidates for ordination in 1874, referred to our work in kindly words which in those early days touched us deeply. Two years after that, Samuel Coley of sainted memory said, "The seed of many revivals is in this." Here is one fact illustrating the truth of his prediction: at the Conference of 1875 a minister from Australia sought one of the editors to tell him how, through a volume of *The King's Highway* finding its way to the place where he was labouring, a blessed work of grace had broken out, resulting in many conversions. Letters full of encouragement, and speaking of help received, have come to us from India, China, Newfoundland, Canada, South Africa, the United States, Switzerland, and France. While seeking to be true to Wesleyan teaching, we have shown that the doctrine and experience belong to believers everywhere, saints of all churches have been portrayed in our biographical sketches, and from the beginning we have numbered among our subscribers many ministers and members of other denominations.

' On the first page of the first number we said, "The single purpose of *The King's Highway* will be the promotion of belief in the doctrine and attainment of the experience and life of Scriptural holiness, meaning by that term full consecration of heart and life to God, purity of nature effected by the Holy Spirit through the Atonement, perfect love to God and man. Its mission may be expressed in the well-known sentence, 'To spread Scriptural holiness throughout the land.' Assured that God requires His people to be holy, that the Lord Jesus by His

death procured for believers complete deliverance from sin, that the Holy Spirit is given to accomplish in them that deliverance ; and that it is realized through simple faith in the Lord Jesus, the conductors of *The King’s Highway* will make it their aim to explain and illustrate the fullness of this gospel blessing, and enjoin its attainment upon their readers as an obligation and privilege.”

‘ This aim we have kept steadily before us, avoiding controversy as much as possible, especially shunning all personal disputation. None have regretted more deeply than ourselves that the work was not undertaken by more abler hands ; but such as it has been, we have offered it to God through Jesus Christ as the best we could render, and do not consider it presumptuous to see tokens of His approval in the increasing sympathy and friendliness of our brethren, manifested in many pleasant ways, in the continuously widening circle of readers, and in the indications of still greater success.

‘ Grateful as we are to the friends who have done so much to help us, we are still more thankful to the great Master that He should have been pleased to use us in any degree in leading His people into the rest and freedom of His perfect love. Believing that there is nothing better for themselves, or the Church, or the world, we have no higher ambition in the future than to do this work more effectually. “ We know,” says Mr. Wesley, “ there is nothing deeper, there is nothing better, in heaven or earth than love. There cannot be, unless there were something higher than the God of love. So that we distinctly see what we have to aim at. We see the prize, and the way to it. Here is the height, here is the depth of

Christian experience : ' God is love ; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.' ” ”

Many such testimonies as the following reached the conductors :

' In the train last night a man asked me if I was Mr. Brash, and told me a wonderful story of the way the reading of *The King's Highway*—which he has read ever since—was blessed to him four years ago. He was a Christian—a Churchman ; but had never heard of a further definite blessing to be received by faith. He sought and found. He sent his copy to two ladies in the West Indies, who received similar blessing. They sent it to a *leper*—an educated lady, who because of her terrible disease had to be isolated, and she also was brought into the light, and a little while ago died a triumphant death.'

When the time arrives, as it may, that interest is again awakened in the great subject of Christian holiness, some wise man will examine the twenty-eight volumes of *The King's Highway*, and prepare a book of clear vivifying articles, written by John Brash. Several of these were reprinted as booklets by his friends. ' Do the Next Thing ' and ' The Rest-giving Presence ' were issued as suitable for New Year's reading. Out of many choice articles one is here given, entitled

#### THE SOUL'S DWELLING-PLACE

' Where do you dwell ? Most men have a realm of thought to which they revert in quiet hours.

Other subjects occupy them during the time spent in the daily calling ; but when the mind is free, and is not diverted by reading or some specific form of recreation, it returns to the circle of thought that has become its home. We say nothing just now of the chambers of imagery to which many amongst the ungodly habitually return. Where do Christians dwell ?

' Some dwell in the sorrows and disappointments of the past. Forgetting the goodness and mercy that have followed them, they remember only the hardships of their lot, and the injustice and wrong from which they have suffered. We heard a man say in a meeting for testimony that he could not find anything in all the circumstances of his life to thank God for. An earthquake could scarcely have given a greater shock to those who listened. But there are Christians who, while not so blind to their mercies as he, do nevertheless live in a gloomy den of unthankfulness. A wretched dwelling-place !

' Some, on the other hand, dwell in vain glory. Their thoughts run upon their past achievements, the good things they have said, the clever things they have done, the success that has attended their work for Christ. It becomes their favourite theme of conversation. They tell their stories as for the glory of God, and we believe that in many cases they sincerely seek His glory. But one could wish that their minds lived elsewhere. They are in a dangerous dwelling-place !

' Others dwell in the uncertain future. They live in anticipation of evil. Scarcely have they taken a fresh step in life, or embarked upon a new enterprise, before they begin to fear disaster,



and to live in daily dread of bad tidings. If they see their way up to a certain period of their career, they fret because they cannot see beyond, and refuse to believe that God sees, unless He will condescend to their impatient unbelief, and make things plain to them now. An unhappy dwelling-place !

‘Many dwell in a world of unreality. Their vacant hours are spent in brilliant day-dreams. They feed their pride and vanity by living in scenes in which they are always the hero or heroines. When they come down from these aerial castles to the walks of common life they are discontented. Daily duty is a drudgery. An unwholesome dwelling-place !

‘Where ought a Christian to dwell? Dwell in God. It is there we were made to dwell. He is, and has been from the beginning, the true home of the human spirit. “Thou hast made us for Thyself, and restless are our hearts till they find rest in Thee.” “Lord,” said Moses, the man of God, “Thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations.” And St. John clearly teaches that a true Christian is one who dwells in God. Our God is God in Christ. “Dwell,” in 1 John iv. 12-16, is the same word as “abide” in John xv.

‘How then do we dwell—or abide—in Christ? By doing His will in everything ; by seeing and cheerfully accepting His will in every circumstance of life ; by a continual trust in Him for pardon, strength, victory, purity, power—all we want ; by talking with Him and earnestly listening to Him as He talks with us through the written word. “If ye abide in Me and My words abide in you”—those



are the conditions of all great blessings. All the promises, precepts, and doctrines of Holy Scripture are His words (see 1 Peter i. 11). And to us, individually, if we will listen, each of these will, according to our need, be made living words.

‘ Thus will He become our dwelling-place, not only in the still hour of meditation, with the open Book before us, but in the frequently recurring intervals of even the busiest day, if His words are stored in our memories and hidden in our hearts.

‘ Through His words, as we remember and mentally repeat them, He will give us bright revelations of His love, kindling into a more ardent flame the fire of love already burning in our hearts, enabling us to bring honour to His name by the atmosphere of love that will be about us wherever we are.

‘ If a tumbler, filled to the brim with pure water, is shaken, that which overflows is pure water. And if a Christian, filled with love to his Saviour, is disturbed by injustice, or false accusation, or faithlessness, the overflow will be love; grieved love, it may be love in expostulation, or even in rebuke, but they to whom the words are spoken will in their hearts recognize the love and acknowledge its Source.

‘ Let us leave the miserable dwelling-places in which we have found food for envy, or discontent, or egotism, or low ambition, and dwell in God.

O may the gracious words divine  
Subject of all my converse be ;  
So will the Lord His follower join,  
And walk and talk Himself with me ;  
So shall my heart His presence prove,  
And burn with everlasting love.

*The King's Highway* ran its course of twenty-eight years as a witness and expounder of Scriptural holiness ; its work accomplished, it was incorporated with another magazine having similar aims.

In closing this chapter on John Brash's literary work a record must be made of the valuable aid of the eight honoured brethren belonging to other branches of the Methodist Church. Their intense devotion and varied ability gave to the magazine its distinctive note. Their association with each other and with the editor-in-chief was a pure delight, anticipating the Methodist Union consummated since. The following extract from one of his letters shows how the Lord and Master fulfils, often long afterwards, the purposes of His servants :

‘ I have myself dreamt now and then of putting a series of my addresses into book-form. Whatever of literary merit they may lack, they do, I think, make things plain to inquirers. But it is quite possible my dream will never be realized.’

## CHAPTER XII

### QUESTIONS RELATING TO PRAYER

'Once for All' Prayer—A Perilous Extreme—Prayer and Spiritual Success—Definite Petitions—Prayer as Divinely Originated—Delayed Answers—The 'Open Secret' of Prayer—Praying in Snatches.

#### 'ONCE FOR ALL' PRAYER

DURING the year 1910 the two friends corresponded on the subject of prayer. It arose thus: In one of his letters John Brash complained that his physical condition precluded mental effort, rendering him incapable of prayer at any length. His friend naturally replied that the Divine Being never expected what His creatures could not give, and said, 'Pray in telegrams!' It becomes necessary to present both aspects of this correspondence.

#### FROM A NOTE-BOOK

A letter from my friend Brash has this sentence: 'You speak of telephonic or telegraphic petitions. But I find it rather difficult to believe in the efficacy of petitions for twenty persons or things in twenty minutes. Prevailing prayer cannot but be specific, sustained, concentrated; and of such prayer I am not now capable.'

Before the letter came his friend had written

as follows : ' Of course there is long-continued, persistent prayer. (Parables of importunate widow and friend asking for loaves.) But a prayer may be thought of as a unit—nothing behind—something never to be repeated. To place one petition before the Eternal Mind—sincere, believing, and in Christ's name—is a great, accomplished *fact*. The world will not go on all the same as if it had not been offered. Something in the Divine Wisdom and administration must result, according to His promises. To take a concrete instance : A Christian is impressed to pray for an individual, or for some gift of grace. He prays reverently, carefully, and in assured confidence—the whole transaction occupying five minutes. He may then leave it. God never forgets ; nor does He measure true prayer by yard lengths. McCheyne wrote : " Remember, Christ never loses a believing prayer." One breath, exhaled, passes into the atmosphere which envelopes the earth, so each breath of true prayer mingles with the spiritual Infinite. God only knows what it may work ! The offerer forgets his petition ; it has passed from his will into the divine Will, providing in some way for that Will's accomplishment. A tiny spring has issued from the earth—it may become a river ; an acorn has been planted—there will be a giant oak some day ; a spark has been struck off which may set a forest blazing ; a seed has been sown which may produce a hundred-fold this year, and next year a great harvest.'

In John Brash's mind the practical was ever associated with the spiritual. Hence he wrote : ' The cases of the publican in the temple and the

penitent thief are not parallel to that which I named. In each of those cases the man's whole soul was breathed into the one petition, he thought—was unable to think—of anything else. I spoke of praying for twenty persons or objects in twenty minutes—the quick transition from one to another before the mind had had time to concentrate itself. But God forbid that I should seek to minify the power of prayer! I do think, however, that with respect to “the coming Revival,” there is danger of expecting God to do what He requires man to do. The uniform teaching of the New Testament is that it is by *preaching* that men are to be saved.’

#### A PERILOUS EXTREME

‘With respect to your question about prayer, St. Paul’s exhortation is very explicit: “In nothing be anxious, but in *everything*,” &c. “Pray without ceasing.” It would be impossible, as you say, for every man of business to pray as Mr. — did over every transaction, but I think he ought to do his business all day long in that spirit, and there are cases when in less than a moment he may breathe a prayer that it would take minutes to utter. . . .

‘I have often been suspicious of people who have come to me saying that they had made some specific subject a matter of prayer, and had been told by God what to do. I have feared that instead of praying to God to clarify their mental vision, and deliver them from the selfishness that might warp their judgement, they have prayed until they were able to persuade themselves that the thing they wanted to do was right. And I can remember cases

in which the results were very sad. How liable we all are to self-delusion, and to the running into extremes ! No doubt there are times when a man, finding himself unable to arrive at a settled judgement, has to wait for the openings and leadings of God's providence.'

#### PRAYER AND SPIRITUAL SUCCESS

' I think that prayer is sometimes a false refuge for a man who *lacks courage* to speak the word of warning or exhortation. And when this is not the case there is sometimes an ignorant resort to it as a substitute for work. Did I tell you of a Church Army man I met at Keswick, who said, " Why am I not as successful as Dr. Torrey ? " I don't think I told you that he went on to say, " Sometimes I offer the prayer of faith that my hall may be full. Then I go, and there is hardly anybody there." " How is that ? " he said.

' On the other hand it is unwise and pernicious to resolve to speak at every opportunity. There was a Mr. D—— who did this. He gave some chapters of his experiences in the *Christian*, but so far as I remember, while he told of his exploits he did not quote a single case of success. Christian men have told me that he was a good deal of a nuisance, and was systematically avoided.

' When a Christian is so full of the Spirit as to be delivered from the " fear of man which bringeth a snare," and so detached from thoughts of himself as to be willing at all costs to obey his Divine Master, his sanctified judgement will tell him when to speak and when to be silent, what to say and how

to say it. "The spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets." The man I mean lives in the spirit of prayer, and never speaks without praying.

'I have thought much on the question discussed in your enclosure. It appears to me that a Christian ought *never* to *neglect* any work in order to pray. In a well-regulated life there is time for both. I think that in the case you describe it is a duty to seek for opportunity to speak to the man—not to worry him by recurring too frequently to the same subject, but to say at least enough to let him know that you have a great concern for his spiritual welfare, and are praying for him.'

The thought found expression in the correspondence that God has two ways of answering the petitions of His children—the answer of the voice ('For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, *and He said unto me*'), and the answer of the hand, when He bestows what is asked for. Then followed the thought that, whether or not any answer came, to pray was to obey a divine command, and therefore must be essentially wise and right. On this John Brash wrote, reverting as usual to the practical.

#### DEFINITE PETITIONS

'I am not sure that I quite understand what you mean by prayer as an act of obedience to the divine will. I *am* sure that the fulfilment of God's will, however plainly the will may be revealed, includes prayer. It was after Elijah had heard the sound of abundance of rain that he went to the top of Carmel to pray for it. He knew it was coming, but evidently he knew also that he must pray. So in Ezekiel—



after precious promises—"for this will I be inquired of."

'We say that a great revival came in answer to prayer. So it did. But which was first—the will of God or the prayer that He inspired? While the prayer had to precede the revival, I should hesitate to say that it preceded the will of God to send it. There have been times in my own life when I have been singularly strongly drawn to pray for blessing which immediately followed. Perhaps Elijah would have recognized in the drawing to prayer the sound of abundance of rain.

#### PRAYER AS DIVINELY ORIGINATED

'I fully agree with you about prayer as a *response* to God. I have sometimes told my Calvinistic friends that I can go so far with them as to admit that *God is always first with us*. Further than this, I believe that when the set time to favour a church has come, He specially calls some child of His to pray for the blessing till He knows that He has prevailed. There are mysteries, but in this, as in other things, my conviction deepens that the truest faith is that which asks fewest questions.'

#### DELAYED ANSWERS

Lately I have asked specially in prayer, with a large faith in God's goodness, for one or two things, but the prayer has brought no sign of an answer. This has not in the least affected my confidence in God, but it has led me to ask myself whether that sort of prayer is right, or whether the best way is

just to tell out to God your difficulty or trouble, and then rest in the confidence that in His own way and His own time the best will come to pass. Whatever happens, time will roll on, bringing me—and, I trust, my loved ones—safe home, and that should be enough.

‘But Paul prayed earnestly and importunately for deliverances from the thorn, till he got the answer. It is to his credit that the answer so fully satisfied him. I think also of our Lord in the garden, and, old as I am, I don’t seem to be able to assure myself of the right attitude. But, even so, *He* is faithful.’

His friend wrote that his experience was that God’s answer to our prayer rarely comes on the lines of our preconception and expectation. We look for it in one direction; it comes from another, perhaps from behind us, tapping us on the shoulder and saying, ‘Here I am!’

This arises necessarily from our limited views, and His vast survey.

‘How unsearchable are His counsels, and His ways past finding out!’ We should therefore cherish assured expectation (which is *faith*) as to the answer, leaving the time and manner altogether to Him. (See 1 John v. 14, 15.) We have absolute confidence as to the *fact*, for ‘He cannot deny Himself’; the how and where are His responsibility, not ours.

#### THE ‘OPEN SECRET’ OF PRAYER

‘I have a singular experience in prayer. No sooner do I open my lips to God on any particular business than a voice—more distinct than I can

describe—says, “Your prayer is answered.” I feel that to persist would be to grieve the Holy Spirit, so can only say, “Thank you, Lord!” and pass on to some other subject. In the life of Coventry Patmore—an unexpectedly interesting book—I met with the following: “St. John of the Cross says that this absence of eagerness is a great secret of successful prayer. He says indeed that it is best never to *ask* for anything, but simply to represent to God how it stands with us, and leave it to Him to mend it or not as it seems best to Him.”

‘This is not in harmony with what *we* sometimes say about prevailing prayer. Perhaps we may reconcile the two by saying that the restful prayer is the result of the conflict.

‘But I have lately found a great change in regard to all my prayers. I never in all my life had so impressive a sense of the Divine immanence. No sooner do I close my eyes than I feel myself in the presence of the Triune Deity, and I can present my petition without any effort at concentration, without the headache that used to pull me up so sternly, without strain of any sort.

‘I see the Atonement to be so complete, the way of access through Christ so wide open, God so entirely and infinitely *love*, and that nothing is left to me but to ask and receive. I sometimes wonder within myself whether I have been infected with the New Theology, and whether I have a defective sense of sin, but God knows how humiliating to me is the recollection of the failing, unfaithful past, and how loathsome is pride, and every sort of self-seeking, needing the precious blood which cleanseth from all sin.

‘ Perhaps God takes pity on old age, and is showing me the right attitude toward Himself now that I am being drawn away from the activities of life.’

#### PRAYING IN SNATCHES

‘ Talking of prayer, J——, of this circuit, who knows Dr. Jowett, told my sister that he prays five hours a day. Like you (so I infer) I have to pray in snatches before I get up, sitting in a chair, standing, walking in the playground,<sup>1</sup> rarely kneeling, because of a head trouble that will never leave me. My great trouble is my lack of Christ’s mind—I was going to say, of Christ’s motives—in prayer. How far does the blessed Lord take, and set right, and present in His own name, a prayer which is not inspired by the purest motive? The prayer of one, I mean, who does not fully see as Christ sees, and as Christ feels? I am sometimes perplexed.

‘ Even before I was laid aside, this was always in prospect. Now that is all in the past, I cannot help asking myself what is left to live for?’

<sup>1</sup> A recreation ground not far from his residence.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE TRAGEDY OF THE WORLD

The Universal Suffering—' I Know that God is Good '—Some Light is Given—The Sorrow of the World—An Incident—The Suffering Messiah—A Last Glance at the State of the World.

' THERE are times with every true man when he is bewildered with the mystery of life. There are some things which to me ' (wrote one of the friends) ' seem inscrutable—the mystery of conscious existence, of permitted evil, of the world's suffering ; the mystery of divine love, of the divine life in man, and of the hereafter ; of these the mystery of the world's sin and woe lies heaviest upon my soul.'

Another wrote, more recently : ' I desired an answer to a question that had troubled me for years, namely, " If there is a God, why did He cause so much suffering ? If for our moral good, why was this method necessary ? Why could He not have made us perfect at once if He possessed infinite power ? " '

A passage from Spinoza brought rest to this man's mind, a passage which requires thought to apprehend :

Many argue in this way. If all things follow from a necessity of the absolutely perfect nature of God, why are there so many imperfections in Nature ? Such, for instance, as things corrupt to the point of putridity, loathsome deformity, confusion, evil, sin, &c. But these reasoners are,

as I have said, easily confuted, for the perfection of things is to be reckoned only from their own nature and power ; things are not more or less perfect according as they are serviceable or repugnant to mankind. To those who ask why God did not create all men that they should be governed only by reason, I give no answer but this : Because matter was not lacking to Him for the creation of every degree of perfection from highest to lowest ; or, more strictly, because the laws of His nature are so vast as to suffice for the production of everything conceivable by an infinite intelligence.

### THE UNIVERSAL SUFFERING

So far back as the year 1895 the two friends were exchanging thoughts upon that ancient and unsolved problem—the world's suffering. Some articles in *The British Weekly* were awakening discussion. Both men were acquainted with Dr. Dallinger, who led the argument for evolution, and whose judgement was that nature is non-moral. The correspondence opened out into larger issues. One confessed to his friend that all the arguments of sceptics were as nothing compared with the difficulty of reconciling the suffering of the world with the idea of an almighty and all-loving God. It may be well to reproduce the words of John Brash's correspondent, then give his thoughts at the time, followed by extracts from a letter on the subject, written within a few months of his removal from us into that Presence where men ' know even as they are known.'

' The thought of the world's agony so oppresses me at times that the thought becomes unbearable. " The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together." It is not only that suffering is present everywhere, but that it is so hideous, so unspeakable, so apparently unnecessary. There is

but little to relieve the darkness. I have read James Hinton's *Mystery of Pain* over and over ; it gives only hints, mere guesses at a solution of the infinite problem. The world seems full of agony from its lowest to its highest. There are cruel plants, which torture and kill insects. There are infinitesimal murderers, parasites, which gnaw and destroy. Then, higher, dragon-flies, hawks, stoats, vultures, tigers—made to kill, and to kill cruelly. One thinks with a shudder of the pains endured by creatures whose bones are broken by accident. Then, the cruelties of men—of savages all the world over. One's heart sinks at the recollections of African wars, and Chinese, and of Armenian and other atrocities. All along the line of history it has been the same—Egypt, Assyria, Carthage, Rome, the Spaniards in America. What horrors rise in memory as these names are set down ! It seems as though man were just another and higher organization to inflict pain. How much of this cruelty is due to education and circumstances ? What chance have, say, the Kurds of being other than cruel and destructive ? When facts like these are faced one can understand and compassionate the agnosticism of some men, the bewilderment of others who ask, like the ancient prophet, " Wherefore hast Thou made all men in vain ? " "

It was thus one man laid bare his secret trouble, and it was thus that John Brash replied :

' I KNOW THAT GOD IS GOOD '

' I have read those articles of Dallinger. They present to me no greater difficulties than I have



found all my life in reconciling unavoidable human suffering with my faith in the divine goodness. Taking humanity in the mass—as Dallinger does the animal world—there is an immense amount of misery, but on the other hand we have in Jesus Christ a clear bright revelation of the Father's love. We are therefore bound to believe—though we are unable to see—that there is harmony between the suffering and the love, and especially to believe this when the suffering comes to ourselves. Is not this what we say to the poverty-stricken, and the diseased, and to the heart-broken widow when the breadwinner is taken away, perhaps by a mine accident? But while doing this we are allowed, nay it is our duty, to rejoice in our blessings, and to cultivate a thankful spirit for all that makes our lives pleasant. We need exactly the same faith in regard to the dark side of nature, and are under exactly the same obligation to acknowledge the goodness of God in nature wherever we see it; and there are many directions in which, if our eyes are open, as were the eyes of the ancient seers, we cannot help seeing it. Can you get hold of A. Russel Wallace's *Darwinism*? There is a chapter on this very subject admitting all that Dallinger says, and—to my mind—more than all that he says, but showing also the *alleviations*, and enabling one to see that there is much joy in the animal world so far as it is capable of joy. We are bound to admit that the good men of olden time did not see the dark side as we do, but the side that they did see was really there, and is there to-day. I feel, however, that in the presence of these great questions I am a little child. Well, a child can

trust and wait, and probably that is all that the wisest can do.'

#### SOME LIGHT IS GIVEN

A little later he wrote :

'The mysteries of which you speak were often a burden to me in the earlier years of my ministry. I can remember two or three times in my life when I was in a horror of darkness. But of late years I have had rest. There are mysteries still. I am no nearer to a solution than I ever was. But if it be true that "a Creator must be at least the equal of his highest creation," and it is impossible to deny it, then "God is love." All human love combined, the love that is distressed by the sad facts of the world's history, is a faint spark from the infinite flame. Then I look to Jesus, remembering His own words, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father," and find it impossible to doubt that "God is love." Who am I that I should even attempt to solve the dark problem?'

Any glint of light upon a problem so inexplicably dark is welcome—as to a traveller on a moonless and starless night is the glimpse of a star for one moment as the clouds part. We only reach reality of knowledge through experience; only sense of need makes spiritual truth actual. We cannot know God's mercy without experience of the misery of sin, nor His comfort without sorrow, nor His perfect wisdom except through our own ignorance, nor His unchangeable friendship except through loss of friends, nor His eternity except as our own mortality is brought home to us.

We see this in the advance of nations ; Darwin, ignoring the Divine Being, apprehended the fact in his doctrine of the survival of the fittest ; James Hinton came nearer truth in his *Mystery of Pain*. What if these considerations throw light on God's dealings with humanity as a whole ? What if only through that permitted wickedness which shocks us, and that suffering and woe which, in Coleridge's words, makes us turn cold to our very souls---what if only *thus* can the world come to know His infinite mercy, wisdom, and love ?

Surely this was in the mind of St. Paul when he wrote :

' For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all.

' O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God ! how unsearchable *are* His judgements, and His ways past finding out !

' For who hath known the mind of the Lord ? or who hath been His counsellor ?

' Or who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed upon Him again ?

' For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, *are* all things ; to whom *be* glory for ever. Amen.'

We again quote John Brash's thoughts on

#### THE SORROW OF THE WORLD,

showing that in his later years the same problem still distressed him :

' While I am not pessimistic, the sight of human suffering oppresses me more heavily than in former days. For example, the long queue of two or three

hundred men in front of St. George's Hall, shivering with cold, and waiting an hour—two hours—each for his cup of soup at the cart—some of them dropping with hunger before their turn comes, the same sad scene every day in all weathers for weeks past—it is heartbreaking. And yet there is nothing in it all so very exceptional. In India tens of thousands, and in China millions, have died of famine in one season, and little has been said of it.

#### AN INCIDENT

‘ At Kingstown I spoke one day on “ Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth and one convert him,” &c. Referring to the phrase, “ Shall hide a multitude of sins,” I quoted Micah, “ Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea,” and said that while it was true that Christ bore away all the sin of all the world when He died upon the cross, there was a very real sense in which He was still bearing all the unforgiven sin in the world ; and when we converted a sinner from the error of his way, a multitude of sins was cast into the depths of the sea, lightening by so much the load of grief that rested upon the Saviour's heart. During the singing of the last hymn a youngish lady sat down, and sobbed aloud. I met her next day, found she was a clergyman's wife, and had scarcely spoken to her before she wept again, telling me that she was overwhelmed with shame and penitence as she saw how little she had ever done to reduce the burden that pressed so sadly and heavily upon the Saviour that she loved. She said that she was going back

to her work in the parish with a new motive and a fresh inspiration.

‘There is another side. Christ’s will for His disciples was that His joy might remain in them, that so their joy might be full. Clearly the two are not inconsistent. We may be under the influence of both at the same time.’

#### THE STILL SUFFERING MESSIAH

A brother minister, the friend of both, had written asking what construction should be placed on those words in Isaiah liii. : ‘Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him.’ The letter was sent on to John Brash for his opinion, and this was his reply :

‘I don’t quite understand C——’s difficulty, unless it be as to how the Father should put His Son to grief, or, as in the margin, “make Him sick.” In all such expressions I remind myself of the *unity* of the Godhead. The Father puts His Son to no suffering in which He does not Himself share. To inflict is to assume. Passing to the wider question—God is a suffering God, He is one with creation in its travail—human, and animal—vegetable too, for that matter. Wherever there is life there is sensibility, though it may be very faint. Here is where I find my comfort and rest amid all the pain I see around me. God Himself is sharing it, and through it all is working out a great plan of love. C——’s difficulty may be in some entirely different direction.

‘But Christ shares in the sorrow. The burden of it all is His burden. In all their affliction He is afflicted. And therefore it must be right, though

many ages may have to run before we see the fulfilment of the "increasing purpose." I should like a talk with Paul as to what he meant when he expressed a desire to know the fellowship of Christ's sufferings. Be it ours to diminish, in ever so small a degree, His burden, not of suffering only, but of sin.'

The following was written from what was to become a little later his bed of death. It affords convincing proof that his mind retained its clearness to the end :

His friend had written :

'Who has not felt it?—the heart sinking in beholding the sorrow of the world? "I should utterly have fainted"—at the sight of the desperate tides of the world's great anguish—"but that I believe verily to see a divine interposition which shall vindicate the divine goodness in the land of the living." But meanwhile, just as in a personal extremity which makes the heart faint, so in this sorrow we need the words, "O tarry thou the Lord's leisure: be strong, and He shall comfort thine heart."'

To this John Brash replied giving

#### HIS LAST GLANCE AT THE STATE OF THE WORLD

'Lying on my bed of uselessness, without any duties to engage my thoughts, I often am impressed as you seem to be with the world's sin and misery and agony in this, and specially in other countries. When I find men quoting so glibly Browning's hackneyed lines, "God's in His heaven, all's right with the world," I wonder what they mean? All is *not*



right with the world by a long way. When and how will it be set right at this rate? There is some plausibility in the suggestion of William James and other psychologists, that when the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ undertook to save the world, He placed Himself under limitations that He might leave room for the co-operation of man in the work. But what a heavy obligation that brings! How far are we accountable for other men's salvation? Reaney, a Congregational minister, afterwards a Church of England clergyman, told me that he could not *live* if he thought that the salvation of any person in this world depended on his faithfulness or unfaithfulness. The burden would be heavier than he could bear. That is an unscriptural extreme, but how far does human responsibility extend? The New Testament commands us to "Rejoice evermore." I am quite confident, amid all the mystery, that there is a coming time when we shall say with hearty thankfulness that "He hath done all things well." In that sense I agree with Browning.'

So these two friends reached the same conclusion :

That the mystery of human suffering is unsolvable.

That God must not be judged by that which is to us unexplainable, but we judge the unexplainable by what we know of His wisdom and love.

That He Himself is one with His Son, and shares the boundless suffering of humanity ; and

That a time will surely come when the mystery will be solved, when a clear dawn will replace the long night.



## CHAPTER XIV

### THE SECOND ADVENT OF JESUS CHRIST

Two Opposite Views—'A Good Time Coming'—An Inspired Address—'That Day'—The Millennium Rest—Is the Advent at Hand?—Waiting and Watching—A Spiritual Coming—Note by Rev. G. E. French.

IN the early 'seventies' one of the two friends attended a prophetic Conference at Mildmay Park, London, and wrote an account of its proceedings to the other. At one semi-private meeting the question was discussed of the nearness of the End, cards being distributed with the texts 1 Tim. iv. 1-3; 2 Tim. iii. 1-5; and while some maintained that the predictions had their fulfilment in the Dark Ages, others contended that their application was to modern spiritualism. To the clerical companion who had introduced him, John Brash's friend said,

'Wash me, and make me thus Thine own;  
Wash me, for mine Thou art,

means more than all this theorizing.' 'My wife,' replied the clergyman, 'has been studying the subject for twenty years, and is as yet only at the alphabet of the doctrine.' 'Then I give it up!' was the answer. The two correspondents felt that to spread holiness was their specific work.

During John Brash's last illness a slow-combustion stove was obtained for his room, and an intelligent working man spent some hours in fixing it. He had no idea that the invalid was a minister; but seeing some theological books on the shelf, he asked, 'What do you think about the Second Coming?'

'I think it will be spiritual.' 'So do I.'

The man was a member of the International Bible Reading Association, one of a group of working men who, belonging to no religious denomination, met on Sundays to discuss these questions.

At intervals during several years this was a subject of correspondence. Questions like these were discussed: Is the Coming we are to anticipate necessarily bodily? May not the final Advent be as remote from us as from the early Christians? When He said, as Revelation closed, 'Surely I come *quickly*,' could He mean an immediate physical return? The event shows that He did *not*; for two thousand years have elapsed since He gave the promise. Then do not those truly love His appearing whose present hope centres itself on a spiritual *Parousia*?

To these questions their minds often reverted, as the following paragraphs show.

#### TWO OPPOSITE VIEWS

'The subject demands seriousness. The great trouble with the men of Dr. Beet's school is Rev. xx. 1-7. Their explanation of it has never been satisfactory to me; I doubt whether it quite satisfies themselves. It would be a great relief to

hem if they could discover the passage to be an interpolation, or if they might, in some other way, be allowed to rule it out. Nothing in W——'s letter impressed me so much as the paragraph he quoted from Dean Alford.

'But on the other hand the efforts of the pre-millenarians to reconcile all the other predictions with this are equally lame. I heard Dr. Sholto Douglas preach a sermon proving that there are *five* comings of Christ predicted in the New Testament, reminding me of those rabbis who, unable to reconcile the prophecies to a suffering and a conquering Messiah, looked for two.

'Pre-millenarianism has always seemed to me an essentially Calvinistic doctrine; and yet Wesley believed it, so did Charles Wesley, so did Fletcher—all extreme Arminians. John Wesley said *every man must believe it* who believed the Bible.

'Modern Methodism has deliberately projected the second Advent into so distant a future that it is scarcely ever named. In all the ten years that I have been listening to sermons, I do not remember one reference to it. This cannot be right.'

#### 'A GOOD TIME COMING'

'I find myself oscillating between two views of God's purpose for man in this dispensation. Down in my heart is the conviction that we are to look for the universal spread of Christianity—to labour, to pray, to believe for the Christianization of all men in this and every land, and with their Christianization the conformation of the social order to His Will, producing peace and plenty everywhere in this

dispensation. Then I wonder whether there may be truth in the theories of the Futurists that God is now calling out a people for His name, and that there are in store for the poor world great convulsions and catastrophes, physical, or political, or international, or all combined, before the dawning of the bright serene millennial day.

‘ If the former view is the true one, and if Christ does not come upon all men in greater power of the Holy Ghost than has ever yet been known anywhere, then we have a very long row to hoe before this fighting, warring, selfish, greedy world is saved from its sin.

‘ A few days ago I read Kingsley’s *Yeast* for the third or fourth time—a book written when questions relating to “ the condition of the people ” were, through his, and Carlyle’s, and Maurice’s influence, prominent—“ parochial questions,” Mr. Chamberlain now calls them. In the preface to the fourth edition of the book, he speaks of the state of things described in it as fast passing away, and evidently believes a happy England to be very near. Alas !

‘ Well, I am sure I have faith in God. What I need is to be—as the Mystics used to say—patient with Him, sit and dream, and sometimes sing, of the good time coming. No doubt you have heard that on one occasion—in the Free Trade Hall—when Henry Russell had sung his favourite song “ There’s a good time coming, boys, wait a little longer,” and when the applause had subsided, a man in the audience cried, “ Mr. Russell, would you be good enough to give us the date ? ”

## AN INSPIRED ADDRESS

‘ I did not tell you about something of an adventure I had at Redhill. On Friday the General said that there had been no address on the Lord’s coming, and that I must give one—fifteen to twenty minutes—prior to the missionary speeches. I frankly told him that I did not belong to his school. He was struck dumb, but like a true gentleman recovered himself immediately and began to talk, Mrs. —, too, on other subjects, as if nothing had happened.

‘ In a few minutes I had a sort of inspiration, and told him I would do what he wished. He was delighted. I took Mark xiii. 34-37. Three thoughts—(1) The New Testament said much more about our Lord’s coming than about dying. We, for the most part, had shifted the accent. Ought not Christ and His apostles to be our model? And ought we not, to seek to live in a similar atmosphere? (2) “ Every man his work ”—gave me an opportunity of saying something to those who had found full salvation, on the sacredness of all work, the evil of discontent, the possibility of being as holy just where they were, as in the most favourable circumstances they could imagine. (3) Who are they that will be ready when the Lord comes, and in the true sense “ watching ”? Not the man who says, “ My Lord delayeth His coming,” and not they who leave their occupation to look for His coming. I spoke specially on this, telling of a lady who said to me that things were going from bad to worse, and she had lost all hopes of anything more being done till the Lord came. The Master would be best pleased with those who were steadily doing their work as if

He had never left them. Begin each day with God. Commit it to Jesus Christ, to be lived out for Him all the way through from morning till night. Then if we sleep before He comes—well. If He comes before we sleep—still well—all will be caught up together in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.’

‘ THAT DAY ’

In harmony with the address then given, and in illustration of his practical method of treating the subject, we may give a leading article which he contributed to *The King's Highway* in January, 1898.

“ That Day.” What day? The day when the Lord will come to reckon with His servants. Is it as constantly present to our minds as it should be? Are our lives as powerfully influenced by the thought of it as our Lord designed when He spoke His parables? Shall we most wisely ask ourselves whether there is not need of readjustment in this matter?

‘ Christ is with us “ all the days ” (Matt. xxviii. 20, R. V. marg.). A life that is not spent in daily fellowship with Him, daily trust in Him, and daily subjection to His will in all things is not a true life. But St. Paul, than whom no man had a more vivid realization of Christ in daily life, never lost sight of THAT DAY. It was constantly in his thoughts. His Epistles are full of references to it. His anticipations of it furnished him with some of his most powerful exhortations to steadfastness. Is it right that it should be so largely forgotten by us who are eighteen centuries nearer to it? Does not the exhortation to the Hebrews, “ So much the more



as ye see the day drawing nigh ” (Heb. x. 25), apply with even greater force to us ?

‘ It is not for us to hazard even a conjecture as to the time and manner of the Lord’s coming. Where there is such hopeless disagreement among lifelong students of prophecy, who are we that we should dogmatize on this great theme ? It would seem that there is a line beyond which it is not lawful to pursue inquiries. They who overstep it are mostly covered with confusion. But this uncertainty is no reason why the solemnities of THAT DAY should not be restored to their right place, amid the motives for holy living. A fixed habit of looking for the Lord’s coming will be salutary in many ways.

‘ It will increase our watchfulness against sin. While none of us would make Christ a minister of sin by presuming on His willingness to forgive, there is a strong tendency to assume that when the sin has been confessed and pardoned everything is as before. Nothing will so effectually deliver us from this delusion as the thought of THAT DAY, bringing home to us the great fact that each failure is a diminution of our eternal joy—that though the sin may be blotted out, there is loss that never can be repaired.

‘ It will stimulate us to greater activity. The motive which impelled St. Paul on his career of self-sacrificing labour was *love*. “ The love of Christ constraineth us.” But even he found additional strength and courage in the desire to finish his course with joy, and to give to the Lord Jesus a good account of his ministry. Have we not sometimes been silent when, if we had thought of THAT DAY, we should have spoken for Christ ? “ There is a



coming Day," exclaimed Dr. Chalmers, "when it will be better to have saved a soul than to have preached a thousand good sermons." "My brother," said a man to his friend, "it will give thee more joy in the day of the Lord to have one man own thee as the instrument of his conversion than to have been made the most popular orator that ever addressed an audience."

'It will make us feel the need to abide in Christ, that we may be always at our best. Unreadiness to "buy up the opportunity" too often arises from our being out of touch with Jesus Christ. The flame of love to Him, and therefore to those for whom He died, is feeble and flickering, owing, it may be, to hurried devotions or forgetfulness of His presence. David Stoner once said that he was living in "a low degree of perfect love." More than that is needed if we are to make the most of life, and to spend each passing hour as we shall wish we had when we stand before the Lord in THAT DAY.

'It will develop in us, in its purest form, what is called Social Christianity. "Inasmuch as ye have done it to one of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me." These words are inseparably associated in our minds with the transactions of THAT DAY. Their influence upon our spirit and conduct will be according to the vividness with which we realize the day. We effectually serve our fellow men only so far as we hear in the cry of suffering humanity the appeal of the suffering Christ.

'It will help us to bear cheerfully the ills of life. It is not always enough to tell troubled

Christians that it is the will of God to make all things work together for their future good. They believe this, but are discontented still, because their chief desire is for present ease and comfort. The future has little reality for them, because they seldom think of it. Students know that their success on examination day depends upon present application to work. But one student allows the day to be crowded out of his thoughts by his passion for the pleasures of the cricket field or the river, and when the day arrives is filled with self-reproach ; while another looks forward to the day each morning of his life, works with it constantly before his mind, and therefore when it comes meets it with joy.

‘ So with the Christian ; whether his affliction shall be an evil or a good depends not alone upon his belief in God’s goodness, but in his willingness to endure present suffering for the sake of future gain. He joyfully accepts the will of God in dark days, and his afflictions are sanctified, just so far as he thinks of and lives for the “ Well done ” of that day.

‘ So much remains unsaid ! We have touched only the fringe of this important theme. Any Christian with a Concordance or Reference Bible in his hand may pursue it with great profit. Nothing will avail us in THAT DAY but the precious blood of Christ ; only through His atonement and mediation can the holiest saint be accepted ; but all His teaching combines to show that faithful service will count for much.

The Cross now covers my sins,  
My past is under the blood.

Nothing can we do but leave it there in mingled shame and thankfulness. But something of life is left to us. Shall we begin afresh, and from to-day so walk with God in union with Christ that, when the activities of life are all behind us, we shall be able to say with Paul the aged, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at THAT DAY?"

O that each in the day  
Of His coming may say,  
"I have fought my way through,  
I have finished the work Thou didst give me to do."

O that each from his Lord  
May receive the glad word,  
"Well and faithfully done;  
Enter into My joy, and sit down on My throne."

#### THE MILLENNIUM REST

'About the Second Coming—does it not strike you that everything depends upon the position given to Rev. xx. 1-10? Shall it be brought into harmony with the Gospels and Epistles, or shall they be brought into harmony with it? Certainly Grattan Guinness and the men of his school have to do great violence to the Gospels. It was evidently the will of God to leave the whole subject in much obscurity. There may be danger, if not sin, in being too definite and confident. At our Lord's first coming the scholastic students of Scripture rejected Him, while the common people, whose expectations were more vague, and who therefore were more open to conviction, received Him gladly.

‘ Dr. B—— seems to be of Dean Farrar’s school—a very numerous one—who believe that Christ came the second time at the destruction of Jerusalem—that His descriptions in the Gospels apply to that and nothing else, and that we are now in the millennium. It appears to me to answer very poorly to the description of it in Revelation. Mr. T——, that Northumbrian clergyman whom you know, is of this opinion, and does not consider any other worth looking at. It has always appeared to me inconsistent to apply a portion of our Lord’s discourse to one event and the remainder to another, especially remembering that He said at the close, “ There be some standing here,” &c. But you are right when you say, in other words, that whatever the belief respecting the future, the present practical obligation is the same. Certainly anything that weakens faith in the provisions of the present dispensation and tends to the relaxation of energy must be wrong. Though one is bound to admit that—inconsistent as it may seem—none do more for Foreign Missions than the people of the newest school—the school of which T. W—— is a disciple. There is no Missionary meeting like that at Keswick, and the bulk of the people attending it are what are called Futurists.’

#### IS THE ADVENT AT HAND ?

‘ I fully agree with you with regard to the earnest piety to be found in the Evangelical section of the Church of England. My attendance at the Keswick Conventions has brought me into intercourse with many—not of the clergy only, but the laity, with whom I have been able to talk on intimate spiritual

subjects more easily than with many of our own people. The trouble is that they are all Calvinists and believe in the final perseverance of the saints, making conversation a little embarrassing at times.

‘I enclose you these two letters from ladies that you may see how they are possessed—obsessed we now say—by the expectation of our Lord’s speedy Advent. Professor M—— is a close Bible student, but without a spark of imagination. He translates everything literally. From this I shrink. I don’t think it accords with the mind of the Spirit. I look of course for the second Advent, and believe it may be soon, but prefer to hold my expectations in a more fluid form, willing to learn the exact meaning of prophecy in the light of its fulfilment. What a glorious Advent it would be if the Lord were to come in the fullness of the convincing and converting power of the Holy Spirit upon the populations of this and other lands!—better than His bodily appearance in Jerusalem—better than the leadership of armies and bloody battle. A present Saviour is our greatest need, and, thank God, our richest treasure.

‘More than all in Thee I find.’

#### WAITING AND WATCHING

‘I have ceased trying to understand the Book of Revelation, beyond seeing in it a blessed assurance of the final triumph of good over evil, when the kingdom of this world shall have become the kingdom of our God and His Christ. Every orthodox theory is to me more or less incredible. Our own post-millennial doctrine, for example, with its

explanation of "the first resurrection"—those who will take part in it—and "the rest of the dead."

'The old pre-millennial view has more difficulties still. I mean that taught in our own day by the Bonars, McCheyne, Grattan Guinness, &c. When Christ is in Jerusalem, Christians everywhere will have to pray in His name, and receive mercy and grace through His mediation, and derive their spiritual life through living union with Him as at present, and the thought of two personalities will be confusing. I once read a vivid picture by Ward Beecher of the pilgrimage to the Holy Land, the famine, the pestilence—hundreds of thousands would never be able to see the Lord. No doubt Cook would organize cheap trips to Jerusalem.

'Then the theory of the Futurists, who, to find a place for 1 Thess. iv., place the whole of Revelation from chap. iv. 1 onward subsequent to it, is to me the most fantastic and impossible of all, though nearly every Evangelical churchman I know accepts it. Every day they are waiting for the saints to be caught up—the captain from his ship, the engine-driver from his locomotive, the mother from her family, &c. Then will follow the terrible times—times of revival also, Jews the preachers. Then the next Coming, with all its sanguinary scenes.

'We cry, "How long, O Lord? How long?" and look eagerly into prophecy for an answer. We wonder that He should look upon so much suffering without signal interference. "He does nothing," said Carlyle to Froude. I find my rest in two great facts—(1) God is Love; (2) One day is with Him as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. I remind myself that He is Himself all the time



sharing in the suffering, that He is the greatest sufferer in the Universe, and that *He patiently bears it* because in His infinite presence He sees the time when good will be wrought out of the evil.'

#### A SPIRITUAL COMING

' R. M——'s numerous books, in which he works out in literal fashion all that will happen, are grotesque, calculated to excite ridicule rather than reverence.

' F. S. W—— once told me that he could not pray for wars to cease, because Jesus Christ, when He came, would be a great commander and would lead His people on to bloody conflicts. This implies that there will be many who will not believe in Him. They would not fight against Him if they knew Him to be the Christ.

' The doctrine brings some sort of rest to many Christians. After nearly 2,000 years the true Christians even in a Christian country form a very small minority. And amongst that minority how few there are that, for example, will read books like yours. If men can persuade themselves that this is an interregnum during which God is calling to Himself a people for His name, prior to more signal triumphs, they are willing to share His patience and wait. The more rational, and I think the more scriptural, conclusion would be that the Church is lacking in spiritual power. Perhaps we are on the eve of brighter days. I have heard many addresses on this subject—a Keswick Convention would be lacking without at least one. But every one that I have listened to has confirmed me in the belief—

that the coming is spiritual, and will continue so until the great day when the world is judged in righteousness. . . . I wish some one of our own scholarly men would tell us precisely what Christ meant others to understand by the *Kingdom of God*. Sometimes He speaks as if it had come. Yet in His own prayer He teaches us to pray for its coming, and seems to intimate that when it does the will of God will be done on earth as it is done in heaven. It may be that all this has been done, but I am not in the way of seeing their books.'

NOTE.—The confidence with which, in some quarters, the future is anticipated seems to me perfectly amazing; and it is all but certain that in the view commonly held about the Second Advent of Christ the Church is just as far astray as were the Jews about His First Advent. The 'shout, the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God,' in St. Paul, are in the same category as Joel's 'Wonders in the heaven above and signs in the earth beneath; blood and fire and vapour of smoke,' and the fulfilment is no more likely to be literal in the one case than the other.—REV. G. E. FFRENCH, in *Hibbert Journal*, July, 1912.

## CHAPTER XV

### A SHEAF OF RIPE CONVICTIONS

Calvinism and Arminianism—Hereditary Depravity—Addressing Ministers—Success in Christian Work—Is Revival Near?—A Man's Ministry—Modern Preaching—Ebenezer—A Preaching Experience—Comfort in Depression—' Gospel Christianity '— Varying Views of Truth—Counsels to Evangelists—Concerning Impulses—What is Pessimism?—The World's Sorrows—The Joy of the Lord—Inspiration—The Need of the Hour.

### CALVINISM AND ARMINIANISM

' YOUR question about the new birth reminds me that when James Morrison, John Kirk, Fergus Ferguson, and Rutherford were tried for heresy, the specific count was "Regeneration: does it precede or follow faith?" They said, "It follows faith," and for that they were expelled. Of course, the question covers the whole ground of controversy between Calvinism and Arminianism. It is because of their Calvinism that W. R. N. and the men of his school make that marked distinction between justification and forgiveness to which you refer. Justification is an act done once for all and for ever. A man, do what he may, cannot fall out of it, though he may need a thousand forgivenesses. Dr. A. T. Pierson once said to me that people got into confusion through failure to understand the difference between justification and pardon. I said,

“What is the difference?” He, knowing me to be an Arminian, laughed and did not reply. I, knowing him to be a Calvinist, did not press the question. When I was a candidate for the ministry we were taught that justification, forgiveness, and adoption were essentially the same thing, presenting God to us in the three relations of Judge, King, and Father. But when all is said, there must be a great distinction between a guilty rebel and a penitent child. It cannot be that we fall out of justification every time we stumble.’

#### HEREDITARY DEPRAVITY

‘Personally, I am doubtful whether we can get far away from the old lines with any success. The best thing is to go back to the fountain-head—the New Testament, drawing our teaching from it directly, and ignoring all the theological schools together. I am occasionally surprised at the breadth and outspokenness of some of our ministers. R—— told the people on Children’s Sunday that he had altogether abandoned his belief in original sin. He was now fully convinced that each child came into the world with a nature clean as a sheet of white paper, ready to receive any impression that might be made upon it—bad or good. It is odd that while evolutionists have on this point come round to the old theological position, telling us that each man is the sum of all his ancestors, we should be taking one which science totally denies. This is only one point among others. I could not draw A—— on the Atonement. Yet nothing would grieve me more than to disseminate the distrust

of our men that I find here and there. Nor do I assume that we are all going astray. It may be that we are by devious paths finding our way to one common meeting-ground, on which we can fight together more unitedly for the faith once delivered to the saints. What I feel is, that while we are in this state of transition the Southport Convention represents just one of those movements which are most likely to suffer—at least, for a time.’

#### ADDRESSING MINISTERS

‘Yesterday afternoon I spoke to the brethren of the Ministers’ meeting at Brunswick. I felt that I had a distinct message, but the trouble was to deliver it so as not to be *preachy*. My point was that there are not two distinct states of Christian life, either of which is *allowable*. The teaching of the New Testament recognizes—in its promises and precepts—only one: that of full surrender to God, and full possession by the Holy Spirit. This is the normal Christian life. I could have spoken much more effectively to a more mixed audience. Then an aged P.M. minister had offered a very earnest and spiritual, but very, very long prayer, shutting me up to about fifteen minutes, so that I had to omit some things, and huddle up others. There are always some kind brethren to thank you for an effort to do them good, but I doubt whether my words were received. Somehow this gave me no trouble. My feeling, when I sat down, was one of thankfulness that I had been delivered of my burden. My comfort at such times is in the thought that perhaps the word has been received into the

heart of one solitary man, who says nothing about it to anybody, but who is made a better servant of the great Master for the rest of his life.'

#### SUCCESS IN CHRISTIAN WORK

' Referring to a remark in one of your letters lately, there is still great mystery respecting the conditions of visible success in Christian work. One thing is clear. It is not enough that a man be filled with the Spirit. He must understand the human heart, and know where it is most assailable ; he must preach appropriate *saving* truth ; he must preach it *effectively*, irrespective of the Spirit's power. Moreover he must be a man the people believe in, and like. There are holy men who will never see sinners saved. There are men with much less grace who will scarcely ever fail.

' But how slow is the progress of Christ's work in the world ! I said to my Lancaster cousin awhile ago that it looked as if things were not going to be much better till the Lord comes. He replies that for saying this he has got into serious trouble with his people. He is a " pessimist," " a crank," a " Plymouth Brother," &c.'

#### IS REVIVAL NEAR ?

' I see that F. B. Meyer is of opinion that we are on the eve of a great revival. I hope he is right. But R. W. Dale was saying the same thing constantly during the last years of his life. Three years ago Evan Roberts told me he believed the following winter would see a much greater revival



in Wales than that of the winter previous. These impressions do not appear to be very trustworthy. But how signal is the success of Gipsy Smith, of Wilbur Chapman also, on the other side of the Atlantic ! If one might choose, that is not exactly what we should like to see in this country. If I were on a committee I should not give my vote for a return of Dr. T—— to Liverpool. If only the Spirit of God would move on the hearts of the unsaved all over the land, convincing them of sin, and leading them to ask what they shall do to be saved—all under the ordinary ministry of the word ! It may be that among God's people there is not yet enough of what a " Convention " friend of mine calls " brokenness." The word does not describe my feeling about Liverpool. It is rather a dull, dead, oppressive weight, which I don't seem to have power to cast upon God. It is with me always, when I walk the streets, and when I am at home. My faith in God in regard to myself and in relation to both temporal and spiritual bestowments was never so simple, and therefore never so strong, as now ; but the other seems to be a question apart.'

#### A MAN'S MINISTRY

' I was thinking, before I rose this morning, that, while we are responsible for the improvement of opportunity, we have very little power to choose our course. We think we are choosing, and then look back to see that it was Another who all the while was choosing for us. And how little we are able to estimate our success ! We have a great wish to round off a piece of work, spiritual or ecclesiastical,

not always the same thing—satisfied to see it, as we think, finished, forgetting that we are just journeyman-builders, and that the work will never be finished until the headstone is brought on. All that we do, at best, is to hew a few stones out of the quarry, and to polish a few others, and fit them for their places; then disappear, that others may begin where we left off. I infer from what St. Paul says to the Corinthians that in the coming time—not all at once, it may be—each will know the exact measure of his accomplishment. The revelation is likely enough to be rather surprising, possibly most surprising of all to those who filled the largest space in the Church's eye. Well, the lesson is, "Act, act, in the living present." It is just possible, however, that you have heard that before.

'Dr. Jenkins once said to me, "Thank you for your *message*." I have thought a good deal about it since. God gives to each of us a "message." How important to deliver it in the name and the power of the Spirit of Christ Himself! And how needful to be always in living union with Him! May I be! And—loving my neighbour as myself—may you be!'

#### MODERN PREACHING

'I agree with you that we hear very little nowadays about salvation by faith. I should rather say *justification* by faith. In our mission halls Christ is offered to men as a Saviour to give them the victory over their sinful habits, which He will do if they accept Him as Master and Lord. H. P. Hughes once told me he preached Christ in this sense, and

said very little about sin and forgiveness. It seems to answer in many cases, but I could not preach Christ in just that way. Such a representation of Him would not bring peace to my own conscience. I think there must be in the hearts of these men some faith in Christ as the atoning Saviour. I sometimes think that this method of preaching is answerable for the fact that we have in our churches a sort of people who were not found in the Methodist congregations of former days, upright, "good-living" men and women, who have never felt their need of a change, the "devout" people who will not meet in class.

'I remember that Finney somewhere puts the question in another form. He says that in the early Christian days, when the gospel was preached to Jews and heathen, the great condition of salvation was *faith*, but that in these days it is *submission*. This was what he always aimed at in his preaching. There is a great truth in this, though it is just the antipodes of the gospel preached by the "Brethren," and many undenominational evangelists. I need always what Dr. Watts needed when he sang :

My soul looks back to see  
The burden Thou didst bear  
When hanging on the accursed tree,  
And knows her guilt was there.

'One good thing about Dr. Forsyth's preaching and speaking is that he is seeking to bring us back to this view of the truth—like Dr. Denney. They are both Calvinists, Forsyth rather high ; but there are always points on which evangelical Christians must agree to differ.'

## EBENEZER

‘ My text was : “ To see Thy power and Thy glory, so as I have seen Thee in the sanctuary.” “ A psalm of David when he was in the wilderness of Judah.” The place that in his exile was most in his thoughts ; not his throne, palace, &c., but the sanctuary. His most cherished memories, the divine power and glory seen there. Our own tenderest memories are of the times when God met us in our sin or our trouble, and caused His face to shine. No place is so much endeared to us as the places where He thus visited us. Illustrations from the histories of Old Testament saints : (1) “ Bethel ” ; (2) “ Peniel ” ; (3) “ Ebenezer.” applying each as I went on, not only to those present, but to those who in past generations had here received blessing. (There was no time for “ Jehovah-Jireh.”) On “ Ebenezer ” I told them that when as a young man I had preached there to a Sunday night congregation, I little dreamt that eight and forty years afterwards I should be standing in the same place preaching the same gospel ; least of all that it would fall to my lot to conduct the closing service. The recollections humbling, still, “ Ebenezer.” They seemed to be moved, and I think it was a good time. The whole sermon came to me on the Monday morning as I was having breakfast in bed.’

## A PREACHING EXPERIENCE

‘ Last Sunday night I went to the Central Hall rather down in spirits, with an unfamiliar subject, Rom. vi. 23. I could not fix my attention, and

seemed to be lacking in mental power to make a good preparation. The feeling pursued me all through the service, and I felt myself blundering. I was coming away sorry for the mistake I had made in the choice of my subject, when Parrish, the missionary, said to me, "Well, you *have* had a good time," and went on to say it was the best sermon he had ever heard me preach. I laughed, and told him that if he thought so I was thankful. He then told me that two American ministers who were there had greatly enjoyed the service. Another American gentleman, who remained to the Sacrament, had said also how very helpful it had been to him. How little we know! Probably there are occasions when I have a good time, and nobody else has.'

#### COMFORT IN DEPRESSION

'I am only too familiar with that feeling of disgust at one's self and one's work to which you refer, leading one to ask, "Where is the good of it all?" The cure is, to remember that it is the Lord's own work, and to be thankful that He condescends to use us in ever so small a way. Some of the work we are doing will abide when we are dead and gone—nay, for ever—and the fruit of it will multiply too. Who shall say to how great an extent? Then for the avoidable and reprehensible failures there is the Atonement and the Advocate with the Father. As I sat in Conference and saw the leading men of the Connexion on the platform and elsewhere, I thought of those who were eminent when I was young, and are now almost forgotten, and there came over me a feeling, stronger than I am able to describe, of the

utter emptiness of such fame as a Methodist preacher, even at his best, is able to win. That which abides is the work they did—and some of them did noble work—in saving and helping individual men and women. And you and I should dishonour our great Master if we did not thankfully acknowledge that He has used us in leading sinners to His cross, and winning believers to a full consecration of themselves to His service. What have we to do but “thank God and take courage”? If we were to drop out of all sight and knowledge to-morrow, the word of the Lord would remain in human hearts, and endure for ever.’

#### GOSPEL CHRISTIANITY

‘Your Quaker friend has been trained to believe in the inner light. He reminds me of William Law, and his distinction between original universal Christianity and gospel Christianity. Original Christianity began with the Fall, when to the human race was given the “true light that cometh into the world,” bringing with it a low form of regeneration, but not the less true. Full regeneration comes with the acceptance of the gospel message. The difficulty is to find any teaching approaching to this in the New Testament. There is very evident tendency among modern Christian men to find a wider door into the Kingdom than that of which our Lord spoke to Nicodemus, and to recognize children of the Kingdom, among the P.S.A. men and others who have a belief in Jesus Christ as a Teacher, and, as your friend says, are trying to do right. But is it not to just such a man as this that our Lord says,



“ One thing thou lackest ! ” and do not forget that Wesley was always careful to admit that a man who was not a child might be *a servant*. I know men myself, honourable, upright, God-fearing, but whom I don’t know where to place ; so I leave them with God, and hope for the best. On the other hand the only preaching that *saves* is that of men who cry, “ Ye must be born again.” The broad charity that gives an uncertain sound to the trumpet “ achieves nothing,” as John Smith used to say.’

#### VARYING VIEWS OF TRUTH

‘ I sent that copy of the *Record* that you might read the clergyman’s testimony. We have holiness on an Arminian foundation, as at Southport—on a Calvinistic foundation, as at Keswick ; there is a High Anglican, who believes that at his baptism he was regenerated, and made an adopted child of God, describing an experience that we recognize as identical with that of the Methodist who has received the grace of entire sanctification. So God works. And yet there are people—holy people—who, forgetting the unsaved around them, are ready to quarrel with every Christian who does not say Shibboleth as they do. I don’t think Jephtha was in the least justified in slaying all those Ephraimites.

‘ On the other hand, I can hardly go all the way with you when you see God in all the eccentric movements of the present day. The Nicolaitanes were a Christian sect, but the Lord severely denounced them. Paul writes of “ the lawless one whose appearing will be attended by various miracles and tokens, and delusive marvels—for so Satan works—and by every

kind of wicked deception," &c. (Weymouth), the people being "given over to a delusion that they may believe a lie." The more I read of Christian Science, the more fully I am convinced that it is of the devil, and is working to the great injury of the Christian Church, whence it derives nearly all its converts. It rests on pillars of falsehood.

'The lesson for us in the parable of the wheat and the tares: "Let both grow together until the harvest"; a lesson teaching us—if I rightly understand it—to look with a patient, if sorrowful, spirit upon the evil that mingles with the good, counter-acting it as far as we may, but not fretting, much less getting angry over it.'

#### COUNSELS TO EVANGELISTS

'On Monday I had to conduct the noon-day prayer-meeting at Hackins Hey. Some of the Evangelistic Society's agents were there. I called upon them, in accordance with custom, for reports of their tent and other work. Some were encouraging, and others rather the opposite. So, discarding what I had prepared, I gave them an impromptu address: (1) Never be impatient with God. Do not for a moment harbour the thought, in however subtle a form, that He loves men less than you do, or is less anxious for their conversion. If there is little visible result, be sorrowful but submissive. But (2) never find an excuse for slothfulness or languid prayer in the fact—for it is a fact—that you have to speak the truth and leave results with God. William Arthur says in the *Tongue of Fire* that a preacher is accountable for power, but not for results. Remember that he is

accountable for power. If a mission threatens failure let the missionary begin with himself, setting right anything he may find to be wrong in his own conduct or spirit or prayers. Let him then collect together the Christians and tell them, never in a scolding tone, but in tender love, what he thinks may be wrong with them.

‘In conclusion I reverted to the first thought, telling them of instances in which a service lived in my memory because of its apparent barrenness, and was discovered, long years afterwards, to have been fruitful and good. The hour was a very happy one, though quite different from the ordinary run of the meetings there, and the missionaries appeared to be very grateful.

. . . . .

‘I have been a good deal interested in Henry Breedon’s *Striking Incidents*. The impression I have brought away from the book is that the Holy Spirit Himself can only sanctify and use what He finds in a man. Another preacher might have B——’s mental gifts or his goodness, but, lacking his *temperament*, would never reach his success. This is what some good men fail to see. They listen to preachers who are their inferiors in every other way, but who have—what no man has unless he brought it into the world with him—the *persuasive* gift in one of its many forms.

‘These good men, only half conscious of their own defect, say, “How mysterious!” It is not at all mysterious. The gift is a mighty instrument in the hands of the Holy Spirit.’

## CONCERNING IMPULSES

'I think that in questions of conscience the first impulse is the truest. With the considerations that follow there is often a mixture of selfishness in some insidious form. But on other questions the men whom we describe as "impulsive" are perpetually going wrong, and bringing themselves and other people into needless trouble. Most impressions need to be scrutinized. I have known men who could always see the finger of God's providence pointing in the direction in which they wanted to go. Sometimes a man receives an impression, and in spite of everything it deepens day by day till it takes possession of him. In that case I think he needs to find a good reason for *resisting it*. The only safe rule is that given to us by our Lord: "If thine eye be single," &c. Again and again, in a time of great perplexity I have come to God in a spirit of absolute submission to His will, and have been surprised to find how plainly He showed me the right way. F. W. Robertson's idea was that in such cases you should choose the course least agreeable to yourself. But I don't agree. I don't think that the holiest and most prayerful man has any guarantee that he shall never make a mistake. That of which he may be sure is that such mistakes will not be allowed to injure his spiritual life, possibly they may be so over-ruled as to help it.'

## WHAT IS PESSIMISM ?

'I have read most of Ibsen's dramas, some of them two or three times. There is great power

in them—awful power in some—but he is a blank materialist, and therefore immoral according to our standards, and frightfully pessimistic. By the way, what is pessimism? And what is optimism? John Morley says that a pessimist is a man who refuses to say it is a fine day when it is raining cats and dogs; and Mr. Chamberlain is always boasting of his optimism. I don't think, however, that the true optimist talks much about himself, but about the bright future, until others catch his hopeful enthusiasm. Whereas here is Mr. C—— trying to frighten us out of our wits by telling us that the Empire will quickly fall to pieces unless we speedily adopt measures it never asked for. It appears to me that his optimism is a fatalistic confidence that everything to which *he* puts his hand will prosper. Very perilous for so great an orator. A Christian optimist is one who never falters in his faith that through light and darkness, sunshine and storm, events are steadily marching on to a time when the universe will ring with the great Hallelujah Chorus. Such a man can bear "to see things as they are," if I may quote Matthew Arnold.'

#### THE WORLD'S SORROWS

'The longer I live the more I am impressed—not to say oppressed with the mystery of things—the sorrow, the suffering, the hard fight for daily bread, the inhumanity of man to man in Russia, and on the Congo, and elsewhere. One does not wonder that men should become so anxious for the Lord's return as to persuade themselves that it is near, forgetting that with Him one day is as a thousand years, and a

thousand years as one day. We need grace to save us on the one hand from hardening into indifference, and on the other from fretful feverish impatience. If He—so much more perfect in sympathy than we—can wait, why cannot we ? ’

### THE JOY OF THE LORD

‘I have been preaching on the perplexing subject of Christian joy. How can a man with a sympathetic heart rejoice evermore in such a world as this ? For an answer seek for the sources of Christ’s joy (John xv. 11) : (1) In His relation to His Father—love and fellowship ; (2) His relation to men—loving them and doing them good ; (3) His confidence of ultimate success. He was often grieved, but never discouraged. There was no self-pity, no mortification over failure, no resentment ; grief to tears as He saw the troubles that perverse men were bringing upon themselves, but He was never disheartened. I referred to what He said about the woman who poured out the ointment, “Wheresoever in the whole world this gospel shall be preached”—the sublime confidence, though He knew that He was going to His crucifixion. This is all very familiar to you, but I say it because I think it is what we need to keep us bright in these rather dark days.’

### INSPIRATION

‘Men may speak as they please about the inspiration of the Bible as compared with other books, but there is a *something* in its words that we don’t find



in other literature. Yesterday morning I woke with these words in my mind, "Strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith." Instantly they were illumined with a new light, and before I had time to be conscious of faith I knew them to be expressive of a blessed reality in my own heart. Have you observed how little St. Paul cares to distinguish between the work of the indwelling Spirit and the indwelling Christ? as in those almost identical passages in Ephesians and Colossians, one beginning, "Be filled with the Spirit," the other, "Let the Word of Christ dwell in you."'

#### THE NEED OF THE HOUR

'England wants a *prophet* like Wyclif, like Luther, like Wesley, like Whitefield. He need not—in these reading days, and with our cheap literature—be an orator. Whether he spoke by mouth or pen would matter little. But all history shows that, for the arousing or uplifting of a people, God has raised up and used a *man*. When he comes he will cause divisions, and most of us will cast him out, but God's work will be done. In the meanwhile He needs the *plodders*, the men who in the name and the strength of the Lord Jesus Christ just do the work assigned to them thoroughly and well, without straining after what is beyond them. How eloquently and well Ruskin insisted upon this, and what blessed results would follow if all Christians learnt the lesson! We should be all the more ready for *the man* when He came.'

## CHAPTER XVI

### GOD AND THE SOUL OF MAN

The Vision of God—Two Types of Devotion—The Sabbatic Rest—‘Live To-day!’—The Deeper Tranquillity—Our Lord’s Sufficiency—The Vision of God and Christ’s Presence—By Grace only—The Presence of God—The Life of Faith.

It may be that the greatest value of these memorials consists in their self-revelations. It is as if the Holy Place in one of God’s human temples had a window of transparent glass through which we behold the glory of the Lord. His temple being ‘the inward man’—to quote the words of Dr. Beet, ‘that in man which is furthest removed from the outer world and its influence, the secret chamber in which man’s personality dwells alone.’ All John Brash’s convictions, opinions, speech, and deeds were alight with the radiance which pervaded that inner shrine.

What follows in this chapter is arranged in order of time. The vision became clearer as the end approached.

### THE VISION OF GOD

‘When I received your letter with those useful

thoughts about understanding God, I was reading *Paul the Mystic*, by Dr. J. M. Campbell, a rather disappointing book. Perhaps the fault was in my expectation. There are eight chapters: "A Rational Mystic," "A Christian Mystic," "An Evangelical Mystic," &c.—really sermons, each with six or eight or more divisions playing rather artificially with the word "Mystic," introduced to give a sort of verbal unity. But I had just read this: "God is present everywhere, and we do not need the Bible in order to *reach* Him, but we do need it in order to *know* Him. Men cry to God as Jacob did, "I beseech Thee, tell me Thy name." To know His name is to know His nature. What would we really know of God's nature if Jesus had not made known His name: Our Father?"

'The words that have been running in my mind for at least a fortnight are, "They shall *see* God"—in everything. In history, in the life of nations, in the great conflict between good and evil, in the lives of individual men—my own included. It never was so easy for me to do this as now, mainly because I have accustomed myself to remember how far-reaching are the divine plans. What is a century to Him? Less than a fleeting hour in your life and mine.

'When I hear men challenging divine goodness, or refusing to believe in a God because they cannot see the goodness, I think of the angry passions of little children because their parents will not do all they want. How utterly infinitesimal is the intellectual difference between the crying infant and the wise man as compared with that between the wisest man and God! How impertinent to bring Him

to the bar of human judgement ! He *is* working out a great plan of love for us all.'

#### TWO TYPES OF DEVOTION

' The other day I felt that what I needed in my present state of inactivity was the spirit of intercession. But it is withheld from me. I pray for relations, friends and churches and missions, but there is no pleading power. It may be that what God requires from me is that "recumbency" of which you speak. Over that there is no difficulty. I am entirely saved from restlessness and fret. It would be a comfort to me to hear a divine voice say : " It is enough."

' I have been thinking, especially while reading the Epistles to the Corinthians, of the differences of temperament. How intense was St. Paul's anxiety for the well-being of these Gentile churches ! How great is his distress when he hears of party spirit, or of immoralities ! How earnestly and constantly he prays for them ! How many tears he sheds on their behalf ! He writes a letter, and then is unable to give himself rest until he knows what has been its effect. In one case so intolerable is the suspense that he sets out to meet the returning messenger half-way that he may know the result. And here is Wesley declaring that nothing that happened to the Societies under his care, and no faulty behaviour on the part of his preachers, ever cost him half an hour's—or was it five minutes?—sleep in his life. But he was full of zeal and love. So far as we can see he knew nothing of strong crying and tears, which is most acceptable to God.'

## THE SABBATIC REST

‘Do you know that that address on “Rest,” which I felt was falling flat at Sleights, had a remarkable effect at Douglas? Hamilton, speaking before me, announced that his address was the first of four that he was about to give on sanctification. This threw me off my bearings, as I had meant to speak on the same subject, and I knew I should have to say what would not harmonize with his next deliverance. So in considering what I had ready that would be clear of doctrinal teaching, I fell back upon “Rest.” Scarcely had I began before I felt that God had given the people into my hands. At the close, many believed and entered in. One lady said with tears in her eyes, “To think that I have been all these years a Christian, and never knew how near to me all the time was the fullness of the blessing!” But all this does not check the cry from a sad heart, “Oh, the lost years! The lost years!” I don’t know whether there is any shame in Paradise. If there is, I am quite sure there will be more shame than joy in my heart when I stand before my adorable Master.’

## ‘LIVE TO-DAY!’

‘But my part is to live in the present, thankful for daily mercies. They are numerous and abundant. Not the least of them is the gracious revelation of God’s love to me in Jesus Christ opening the way to free fellowship with Him, which I am glad to say becomes more conscious every day.

‘I have been reminding myself of the sick lady

who said to her medical man : “ Doctor, how long am I to lie here ? ” “ Only an hour at a time,” was his reply.

#### THE DEEPER TRANQUILLITY

‘ I am thankful that amidst all I have rest in God. I have just read in the Century Bible volume St. Paul’s experience over the thorn in the flesh, the exposition of which to other people has often brought so great a blessing to my own heart, and felt that I could go all the way with him. Surely that is grace, though there is none of the Apostle’s emotion or consciousness, but simply unquestioning faith. I had a warning a night or two ago not to seek for more. I felt that I should bring a return of an old headache, from which I suffered greatly long years ago, and which many a time since then has been a sort of sentinel.’

#### OUR LORD’S SUFFICIENCY

‘ I think that in my Christian life there is less emotion—perhaps I ought to say less ardour—than in yours. I know that God is love, and that He is doing all things well. And I can sing, “ Thou, O Christ, art all I want, more than all in Thee I find.” It is settled between Him and me that He supplies all my need. But everything is quiet. There is not the least disposition to break out into song. In prayer I make my requests known unto God. But there is none of the importunity of former days—none of the “ I-will-not-let-Thee-go ” spirit. And it is no use trying to work up feelings. The one



lesson that I am always learning more perfectly is that of the fullness and the sufficiency of the provision made for me in Christ, and the absolute simplicity of the faith that keeps me in union with Him, making the fullness mine.'

#### THE VISION OF GOD AND CHRIST'S PRESENCE

'We have learnt from St. Paul, *the realization of Christ*; this doctrine is essentially Pauline. But the new Psychology has taken from the person of Christ so much of the divine, leaving its disciples little more than a fallible humanity, that they are passing Him by to seek the vision of God. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say they are passing through Him to the vision of God. To my mind the two things are distinct. An abiding knowledge of the presence of Christ the Saviour, in whom dwells the fullness of the Godhead, with me *now* and *always* and *everywhere*, is helpful and healthy. The vision of God is exhausting, leading to reaction, as I know by experience.'

#### BY GRACE ONLY

'I am about half through *Findlay on Galatians*. He is a clear thinker, and has acquired a singularly lucid style, making his book, profound as it is, very easy reading. It is being to me in the best sense a "means of grace." What an unspeakably precious gift is God's free grace through Jesus Christ! And how great the peace that flows into the heart of the man who can say—

I take the blessing from above,  
And wonder at Thy boundless love.

It appears to me that all through life we have to watch against the insidious lurking of self-righteousness.

. . . . .

‘I am about as usual, confined entirely to bed this hot weather, unable to bear the exhaustion of rising. If I looked into the future I could see gathering clouds, without the promise of deliverance from this tabernacle. But I am letting all alone. The unexpected may occur any day, or not until much farther on in the future, and *God is Love*. The life is just now one of suspense; but underneath are the everlasting arms, and all is well.’

#### THE PRESENCE OF GOD

‘I have been very glad to read those papers. They have given me light on both the Edinburgh Conference and ———’s own meetings. At Edinburgh the men waited upon God until they were united in love to Him and to one another. Then, the conditions being fulfilled, Christ manifested Himself in a manner that will be memorable to them all while they live. But it was not in answer to a special prayer, but because they were ready. I have some personal memories—very precious—of the same sort. The burden of his own meetings was “as at Edinburgh,” but if the people were not fulfilling the conditions, all the prayers for “as at Edinburgh” were useless. If they were fulfilling them the prayers would have been needless.’

## THE LIFE OF FAITH

“The Christian life is by faith”—St. Paul in the memorable passage, Gal. ii. 20, in which he describes his union with Christ, is careful to say that it is a life of faith in Him. Faith is adequate to all the possibilities of the Christian life, and of Christian attainment. The faith that *seeks* manifestations is defective. We all know that Christ does manifest Himself to His disciples as He doth not to the world. For example, the clear perception He has given to me throughout my illness of the perfect atonement He has made for all my sin, of God in Him reconciling *me* to Himself, and of the efficacy of His intercession—all this is a manifestation of Christ. It is supernatural. He dwells in me, admitting me to loving converse, introduces me to His Father and my Father, and when with a glad and trusting heart I say, “My Father God,” the Father Himself comes to me and makes His abode in me. Of all this I want more and more continually, but I believe that if I were to seek for a manifestation of another kind, and distinct from it, I should grieve the Holy Spirit. Christ takes care of His own work, and where there is *obedient faith* the manifestation will not be lacking.’

## CHAPTER XVII

### THE SOUTHPORT CONVENTION

Its History—Scenes of Power—Earlier Meetings to Promote Holiness—Address by John Brash — Unselfishness, Rest, and Power—God's Simple Way.

A METHODIST CONFERENCE on Holiness was held in Wakefield, October 11, 1874, following closely upon the Oxford Conference in August of that year. About fifty ministers and laymen attended, some from a long distance; and after meetings in the forenoon and afternoon to discuss the means of spreading holiness, a great public meeting was held in the evening, at which, after several addresses, about sixty persons came forward as seekers of holiness. That gathering was the expression of a movement already begun. At the London Wesleyan Conference of 1872 a public meeting was held in King's Cross School-room, addressed by the Revs. John Hartley, J. V. B. Shrewsbury, R. McAulay, G. W. Olver, T. B. Stephenson, and others. From that year onward these meetings have been continued. When the Rev. H. Tindall was at Waterloo in 1881 he arranged meetings which lasted for a week, and, on his removal to Trinity Chapel, Southport, held one on similar lines. This was followed by the first great Southport Convention in 1885. Mr. Tindall had received blessing at Keswick, and became the founder, as he was President



Ever yours affectionately,  
John Prash.

(1875).





until his death, of the Convention. Among the speakers at that first Convention were the Revs. James Chalmers, W. D. Sarjeant, T. Cook, W. Waters, J. C. Greaves, J. G. Stuart, W. Middleton, T. Champness, T. Waugh, J. Hornabrook, and I. E. Page. The gathering included persons from almost every part of Great Britain; the tent had seating accommodation for fifteen hundred; crowds attended, and in the words of George Fox, 'the power of God was over all.' John Brash was not present at the first Convention, though he became later one of the principal speakers.

#### SCENES OF POWER

Some day, when the history of this movement is written, records will be made of scenes of remarkable power—as when Thomas Champness spoke of Bunyan's 'Mr. Fearing' to an audience carried away by his words; when James Chalmers appealed with such power to the younger people for a full surrender that some started from their seats; and certain times of overwhelming influence, as when eight hundred persons standing repeated together the declaration, '*I am the Lord's.*' For twenty-eight years 'Southport' has stood for entire sanctification as set forth by the Founder of Methodism, with the Word of God for its unchanging standard of appeal. Thousands in its meetings have entered into the rest of faith, received the enduement of the Spirit's power, and carried a new aggressive force into the churches to which they belonged.

As the two friends were almost every year together at Southport, the gathering was not a matter of

correspondence between them ; the lack can be met, however, by presenting—what so many of his hearers have desired—a report of one of his addresses. The report is taken from *The King's Highway*. It may be entitled :

#### UNSELFISHNESS, REST, AND POWER

‘ Once a Christian man said to me, as we spoke together about the fuller life : “ I do not know that I want anything that I have not got.” Many of God’s own children *do* want something they have not. Many have received a rich blessing, too clear in its manifestation to be doubted, but others are conscious of want—though they may not have a clearly defined idea as to what they want.

‘ I will speak of three things which many want, but have not, and which God is willing to give now.

‘ The first is *unselfishness*. Pure Christianity is unselfish ; there are no two principles more utterly opposed than it and selfishness. In Phil. ii. 3 we read, “ Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory, but let each esteem other better than themselves.” That is, let every man be willing to rejoice in another’s blessings, successes, and merits. Keep an eye on others, that we may help them. The strong reason given is, “ Let this mind be in you, which also was in Christ Jesus ” ; teaching us that Christian holiness is not an emotional experience which evaporates when a meeting is ended, but Christ’s likeness ; and that these meetings are valuable in proportion as they make us Christlike. “ Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God,” &c. As you read

this you see that the grand, distinguishing feature in Jesus Christ the Man is self-sacrifice—"He pleased not Himself." He was surrounded by troops of angels, but "He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." If you are living to be ministered to, you are not Christ-like. Your life is to be a ministry to others. We must not preach the impracticable ; there is a distinction between *selfishness* and self-love. It is not right to say that the hope of happiness and the fear of loss are wrong motives. God appeals to these motives, in promises and warnings. Self-love is a principle of unfallen humanity. God appealed to it in the garden when He said, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." "Love thy neighbour *as thyself*." If it be right to fear lest my neighbour lose his soul, I also may fear to lose my own ; if to wish him to go to heaven, then I may desire to go ; if comforts for him, then may I wish them for myself. That is not deliverance from self-love but from selfishness, which is the exaggeration of self-love.

'In 1 Cor. xiii. we read, "Love seeketh not her own." A selfish man is always seeking his own, and others must yield. [An illustration was given from a scene in a railway station.] Even after the heart is renewed, it is not always fully delivered from this. Its power is broken, but its polluting presence is there. Not until fully saved are we delivered from selfishness. We may pursue our business, but put self in the second place. As we look at sorrowing humanity, when they hunger and thirst, and are naked, "It is I," says Christ, "who hunger, and in visiting them you visit Me and bring

Me comfort." However great a blessing you have received, if God has not done this for you, you want something you have not got.

*'Rest from care. Phil. iv. 6: "Be careful for nothing," &c.* I hear a troubled soul say, "Is it possible that I may be so delivered, that the peace of God shall keep me amid sorrows, evils, and injustice?" Many of God's children do not know how much there is for them in the new covenant. "He that spared not His own Son," &c. There is a reserve in the trust of many—they trust their souls but not their bodies; for eternal safety but not for temporal things; for the past and for heaven. All their difficulty has reference to that short space between. If they could only put in God's hands the piece that lies between! A wonderful deliverance! Sorrow and worry are found in two things—not getting your own way, and fear of futurity. A man said he had in life suffered from many troubles, but most of them never came! We must have confidence in our Father's care and love. What a relief to your poor heart; no care, no worry! "He that believeth shall not make haste." Is it possible? Yes: you may have it; may *now* enter in. A little child is lost in a forest; at last his father finds him and takes him by the hand. He finds rest from anxiety before he gets home—anxiety about the way home. His mind is full of other things; he has rest from the moment he puts his hand in his father's. Put yours in *your* Father's, and you shall have rest—in difficulties, in trials, nothing, nothing can work evil for you. Both hands are set free for God's work.

*'Power for Service. In Acts i. 8: "Ye shall*



Rev. W. D. MOFFAT, M.A.

Rev. F. S. WEBSTER, M.A.

Face p. 218.]

Rev. JOHN BRASH.



receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you."

"*Receive.*" It is a special gift from God. What is this power? Its chief element is love. That is power: love to Christ, and to those for whom He died. "The love of Christ constraineth me." Love from Christ and to Christ in the heart, so ardent and burning that it shows itself in lips, face, and deeds. May we receive power? It is God's will we should. Some expect a talismanic gift; it is not that. We must not make a bargain with God; if we can get power we will serve. This is wrong. The power will sanctify the talents God has given us—some to comfort, some to edify the Church of God, some to mould the young. We are not all cut after the same pattern, or used in the same way. But all need power—the minister, the Sunday-school teacher, the class-leader. Once when I was preaching at Spitalfields, a man rose to his feet and shouted "Glory!" Three months after the minister of the chapel told me how on that Sunday morning that man received a blessing, how they had given him a new class-book, and he now had thirty members. The power will work in various ways. A mother possessing it, filled with holy, Christlike love, may not see the result, but when she is in the skies it is sure to follow. In all spheres this power is needed. May we have all these blessings? We may. Shall we seek them separately? No; all will come together when Christ comes into the heart. On what conditions, then? It is a question of the will. There are not many of us who do not know that this means the surrender of all. Never again shall those wills of ours raise their heads. All else is very easy.



Christ is revealed as a Saviour from all sin, and believing is easy as breathing. Then indeed we "live, not unto ourselves, but unto Him that died for us and rose again." "

To this may be added the application of another address, on—

#### GOD'S SIMPLE WAY

' We have all a clear understanding of the object for which we meet: that we may obtain a clearer apprehension of the doctrine of holiness. But even that is a means to stimulate and encourage God's people to enter now into the life of holiness. We receive letters from weary anxious souls; they do not need more teaching. I wish to interject a few words to those who have thought long, and read and prayed, but who are as greatly in the dark as ever. The longer I live, the more I am impressed with the truth of the words, "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of Myself."

' In Robertson's "Sermons," the title of one from this text is, "Obedience the organ of spiritual knowledge." Many, maybe, will read and study, but "if any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine." To grasp spiritual truth, we are to engage all our faculties, and resolutely determine to enter into the will of God as it is revealed, and so pass through obedience into clear light. Evangelists say that children and uneducated people find peace more easily than those who have long studied the truth from the outside. The latter have much to unlearn, and when at last they find the way, exclaim,

“ Who could have thought it was so simple ! ” So with holiness ; it is perilous to spend years considering it from the outside. The doctrine becomes more mysterious, and men wander farther from the truth. We must not look at it as hidden in Scripture ; it was said hundreds of years ago, “ And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness : . . . the wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err therein.” It is not so much the increase of knowledge that men want, as increase of submission and teachableness of spirit. “ If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will.” “ I am crucified with Christ ; nevertheless I live : yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.” That is holiness. Therefore the first thing for a man to do is, to leave his preconceptions, and lay aside difficult problems. Whenever I hear an address on holiness, I feel I could ask twenty difficult questions. But leave all these difficulties, and enter into personal dealing with the Lord Jesus.

‘ A man said, “ Mr. Brash, can you recommend me a good book on entire sanctification ? I have read Bramwell, Mrs. Rogers, and others.’

‘ I said, “ You have read a great deal too much ; go into your place of secret prayer, look the Lord Jesus in the face, and say, “ I am willing to be Thine on Thine own terms.”

‘ So I say to you, say to the Lord Jesus, “ Long ago I came to Thee and found deliverance. Being justified by faith I have peace with God. But my experience has revealed deeper needs ; I find *self* mingling with and spoiling all, injuring my influence, hindering my usefulness. Wast Thou not manifested to destroy the works of the devil ? What is

inward sin but a work of the devil? As I then trusted for forgiveness, so I now trust for full deliverance." Say :

Saviour, to Thee my soul looks up  
My present Saviour Thou ;  
In all the confidence of hope,  
I claim the blessing now.

' Do you think it will be long before you sing—

'Tis done, Thou dost this moment save,  
With full salvation bless ?

' I have friends in the Church of England, among the Baptists, Presbyterians, and the Brethren, who have come in this way and received it. They fear to give it a name, and call it the rest of faith, or the fuller life. So surely as it is His will to save you, He will make all plain.

' Walking in the country with a friend, she said, " My Christian life is unsatisfactory. It is not all I expected."

' I replied, " You are not allowing the Lord Jesus to be the Saviour He wants to be ; you do not trust Him as a full Saviour. Just as you trusted Him as your forgiving Saviour, so trust Him to purify, and you will find Him all you need."

' On seeing her six months afterwards, she said the truth had at once fallen into her heart ; she had yielded all to Christ, and He had kept her six months in peace. When she heard Miss Cook, of Halifax, speak on entire sanctification, she said, " Why, this is what I found ! " So it must be *Christ first.*'

## CHAPTER XVIII

### FRAGMENTS FROM LETTERS

Resigned—Possibilities—The Retrospect in Weakness—Want of Success—In Dull Seasons—Making Allowances—A Perfect Rest—Prayer in Snatches—The One True Life—A Warning Sermon—Guided Always—The Kingdom of God—Jesus Ever Near—Unsolved Problems—Jesus Christ rules—Christ's Instruments—Spiritual Power—Faith's Reckoning—Justification—Our Real Work—The Great High-Priest—Union with Christ—A Worthy Endeavour—Life worth Living—Jesus Christ the Centre—Normal Christianity—Fill well your small sphere.

#### RESIGNED

‘ I am coming more and more to a life *in the present*, giving up my own way, and living it out as God Himself opens before me *His* way. Ambitions, projects, schemes, seem all to die out, leaving me content to be in God's hands. More than this is needed by a man who has to live among Christian activities. Probably this is the best for me.’

#### POSSIBILITIES

‘ I see so much that I might do if the Lord would give me health. But I remind myself that that has been the case with many better men than I am, and that God was pleased to do without them. So, I am

inclined to believe, will it be in my case, but I must “wait upon God.” Whatever else happens, guidance will not fail me, especially as I am happily free from all personal predilections, desiring only to live in His will.’

#### THE RETROSPECT IN WEAKNESS

‘I am thankful to be saved from depression, and to be content to stay as long as the Lord pleases, and go when He pleases. The one sorrow comes to me through the feeling that has steadily grown upon me that my life has been so much a failure. I used to cherish the hope from year to year that I might through grace recover the past, but that has gradually died out.’

#### WANT OF SUCCESS

‘I can sympathize with you in your discouragements and questionings amid absence of visible results of earnest work. Such success as I had in my circuits always came in *waves*, between which there were often long dreary intervals of comparative barrenness, though I was living as near to God as in the times when every sermon seemed to be used to bring sinners to Christ. What vivid recollections I have of the disheartenment, the conflict, and sometimes—I am ashamed to say—the impatience with God, as if He loved men less than I did! Well, the more simple our faith, and the fewer speculative questions we ask, the better for ourselves and other people. One thing is certain—*all discouragement is of the devil.*’

## IN DULL SEASONS

‘The way to rest at such times as these is to maintain a quiet confidence that all we have learnt of God from His Word is true, and that, whether we feel it or not, He is just as near to us as in our bright and buoyant hours. Then all comes right.’

## MAKING ALLOWANCES

‘Every man of us ought to be filled with the Spirit always, and ready to lay down our lives for the Master who gave His life for us. Our love to men for His sake ought to be a passion ; but I make greater allowances for temperament than I used to do. God seems to have many sorts of work for men to do, and requires many sorts of men to do it.’

## A PERFECT REST

‘One thing is quite plain—the first thing in life is not what we do, but what we are—not success in work, but union with God through Jesus Christ, that we may live in the will of God. Then our work, whatever its apparent present results, will stand the fire. This is what I have been feeling all this Easter, and God has been specially near to me, giving me perfect rest in Him.’

## PRAYER IN SNATCHES

‘Nothing seems to do me so much physical harm as earnest secret prayer ; so I have to be quiet,

and pray in snatches, and tell the Lord it is all I can do.'

#### THE ONE TRUE LIFE

' There is one thing to be lived for always—the salvation of individual men and women from sin. And there is one *life* to be lived always—the life of union with the living Christ in love for the redeemed race—a love that finds its outlet in speech and prayer. And how mercifully it has been ordained that this—the true life—is the life of restfulness and purest joy.'

#### A WARNING SERMON

' On Sunday night I took an old-style *warning* sermon to Pitt Street, "The tares of the field," and felt more of the Spirit's presence and power than for a long time. It was the best prayer-meeting we have had—most largely attended, and a man was convinced and converted. Other unaccustomed outsiders remained to the last. The old steward—a most unlikely man I should have thought—came into the vestry afterwards, and with a beaming face said emphatically, "*This will do!*" Can it be that during the last few years I have fallen into bad ways?'

#### GUIDED ALWAYS

' But I consider myself a fixture where I am, and let these things go by me without any fret, feeling that if God had other work for me to do He would



open my way into it. As I look back on my ministerial career I clearly see His guiding hand in every change, whether it has been in harmony with my choice or against it. Judging from what I have heard others say I imagine that this is far from a universal experience. But to me, *in regard to the way God has led me in that one particular matter*, all is plain. So I have rest in the conviction that it will be right all the way to the end.'

#### THE KINGDOM OF GOD

' But these modern men puzzle me in what they say about the " Kingdom." I fully agree with all that is said about the obligation laid upon Christians to elevate the community in every possible way, and make the earth as much like heaven as we can. But if I rightly understand our Lord's teaching, the entrance into the Kingdom is as narrow as that into the Church. Certainly a man may be an outwardly consistent member of the visible church and not be in the Kingdom. What a lack of *childlike spirit* we find in many who are prominent in the Church ! '

#### JESUS EVER NEAR

' I am thankful that Christ becomes more real to me as a living Saviour, and that I have an increasingly clear perception of His nearness to *every man* in the fullness of His power. Faith in His ability and willingness to apply His word on the spot is easier than it used to be. I felt this last night, even in comparative embarrassment.'

## UNSOLVED PROBLEMS

‘ “ Be still, and know that I am God.” That is the voice I hear. I shall die, leaving a good many unsettled national and international questions behind me, to be adjusted when I am gone. But you will be left ! ’

## JESUS CHRIST RULES

‘ It is not for me to settle all the questions that are being raised during this transition time in our Church. I believe with you that Christ will take care of His own cause, and that under the guidance of His Spirit we shall work our way into clearer light, and greater power to bring men to Himself.’

## CHRIST’S INSTRUMENTS

‘ What a comfort it is to be able to say of all we do, “ Master, this is Thy work, then take the responsibility. I am simply an instrument. Employ me just as Thou seest best. And if Thou canst find another to do it better, so be it.” Here is a little prayer on which I have sometimes formed a short address to young people :

‘ “ Take me ; make me ; use me.”

. . . . .

‘ While I know that He can do without us, I think we shall have enough of His Spirit to retire gracefully. Possibly we have still a future. So the lesson is—make the most of the present, and do all the good

we can to the people who are now reading what we write. Your "Notes" are capital. I appended your name.

' I have a friend who often, when he writes to me, says, "*O let us still go on.*" '

#### SPIRITUAL POWER

' My mind is full of ideas on human responsibility and divine agency in regard to man's salvation, but I have not time or energy to write them just now. All day I have been thinking of a couple of lines in *The Tongue of Fire*, which were burnt into me five-and-thirty years ago, and still remain. "A minister can never be responsible for success, but he is responsible for *power*." What close union with Christ in His dying love for men, what compassion for the perishing, what intense earnestness in efforts to save them are included in "power"! Our little talk on the subject seems to have driven me back upon the "notes" of the old evangelism. I have a longing, which seems to increase daily, to preach with power. Surely it is God's will I should. What remains but that I shall fulfil the conditions? '

#### FAITH'S RECKONING

' Yesterday and to-day I have been looking through Hester Ann Rogers and Carvosso. With what freshness an old familiar truth sometimes comes back to one! What has struck me is the simplicity of their faith. Reckon yourself dead. Reckon—now!—apart from fitness, emotion, experience,

present or past—everything! It has made my heart burn within me to feel how near Christ is in all the fullness of His saving power.'

#### JUSTIFICATION

'I cannot think of a holy life apart from union with Christ, nor is it ever so presented to us in Scripture. I think W. R. N. means more than you suppose about justification. He is an orthodox Presbyterian as regards the "doctrines of grace," and therefore believes in the final perseverance of the saints. Whatever they do, they never fall out of grace. I maintain as we all do, that there is a very real distinction between a disobedient child and a rebel, and am always preaching that the holiest saints need forgiveness.'

#### OUR REAL WORK

'What a future is before Methodism, if only we were all *willing*—willing on God's terms to be filled with the Spirit. Rendel Harris says he is fully convinced that "the future is with the holiness people," and I think he is right. But even holiness people may make mistakes, and holiness preachers. To declaim against the worldliness of the churches is foolish and useless. What is needed is that each of us shall in the Lord's name and in the Spirit's power seek to elevate and purify the people for whose welfare he is more or less responsible, and to bring to Christ the sinners who have come under his influence.'

## THE GREAT HIGH-PRIEST

‘ Just now I am deep in Hebrews, where there is nothing of justification, but much of sanctification, and cleansing through the blood, little of the living union with Christ of which the Pauline epistles are full, but much of the Apostle and High-Priest of our Confession, the divine-human Friend, the merciful and faithful High-Priest whose sacrificial offering of Himself the Father accepts on my behalf, and who is only too ready to ask and obtain for me in His own name all I need to stand perfect and complete in all the will of God. Why don’t I ask and receive? ’

## UNION WITH CHRIST

‘ The one thought that absorbs me is that of my union with Christ in His Crucifixion and His Risen Life. A great fact to be realized by faith ! I did not see it formerly as I do now, and even yet am haunted by the suggestion that I ought to feel in this experience something else, instead of crying, “ By faith I plunge me in this sea.” A nearer, more definite and intimate sense of the personal Christ is what I covet.’

## A WORTHY ENDEAVOUR

‘ There is always comfort amid toils of that sort [in village life] in the thought that we are co-workers with the Divine Master in helping souls as precious to Him as any that are to be found in large cities. If we leave them brighter, happier

Christians, something is done that will endure for ever.'

#### LIFE WORTH LIVING

'To live in God's will, that is the one true rule of life, and I have not the shadow of a desire for any other. To serve those for whom Christ died—what else is worth living for?'

#### JESUS CHRIST THE CENTRE

'More and more the theme of my preaching is Jesus Christ, the risen living Saviour. There is so much in it that appeals to the conscience and the felt needs of all sorts of men, whatever their opinions about inspiration, the antiquity of man, the fall, future retribution, or anything else. While speaking of Him and His salvation I feel like a man kept secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues. All the comfort of my life comes from the knowledge of His nearness, and my oneness with Him. I don't accept the new Psychology, but my reading of it has had a very definite influence upon what, for lack of a better word, I may call my Christ-consciousness.'

. . . . .

#### NORMAL CHRISTIANITY

'What Christians want is to know more of the nearness of Christ in the power of His Spirit, and the simplicity of the condition on which they may receive Him. Anything to make them feel that full

sanctification is—not a state so high as to warrant their excuse for not having attained to it, but—normal Christianity.’

## FILL WELL YOUR SMALL SPHERE

‘ When I read your exclamation, “ I want to save all mankind,” I remembered what I read in one of Samuel Martin’s sermons more than twenty years ago. It was to the effect that a young minister begins his career with a zealous effort to do everything, and a desire to save the world. By and by he discovers how futile it is, and learns that if he is to do anything that is worth the doing he must confine himself to a specific and comparatively small sphere. Then God can use him.’



## CHAPTER XIX

### LETTERS TO TWO LADY FRIENDS

TO MISS K. S——

TO MRS. T——

THE correspondence which makes up this volume so far has been to the friend who was, as he said, John Brash's "other self"; the selection which follows is from two whose intimate counsellor he was for many years, one of them once a successful Christian worker, then for years a great sufferer. His letters to the latter have this pathetic interest, that they were written by one invalid to another. It will be seen that the correspondence with Miss K. S——, which relates to various problems of Christian experience, covers a period of many years.

TO MISS K. S.

1881

' In reply to your question whether it is possible to have perfect and constant victory over all temptation, I do not hesitate to say that you may. All the grace that is needed to make and keep you pure in heart is yours in Christ, and you possess it so long as you abide in Him by *obedient faith*. In

times of temptation it is not always best to *pray* for victory.

‘Prayer at such times often implies defective faith, and frequently the assault is so sudden that if we wait to pray we shall be sure to be overcome.

‘The better plan is to rest in the assurance that in Christ we *have* the victory. It is there for us according to our faith. I have known many who, after a long and uncertain conflict with temptation, have learnt this simple but precious lesson, and who, from that time, have walked in constant light. The simplest, strongest faith is that which just *echoes* the word of God: “The blood of Jesus cleanseth.”’

1886

‘Be sure that you *may* have “sustained victory over sin and over circumstances, and over an impulsive nature and a quick temper.” The victory is not possible, however, apart from a firm conviction that Christ is able to give it to you. Having once for all settled the question that He is able to supply all your need by saving you continuously from all sin, the next step is to trust Him to do it, with a surrender so complete and a confidence so strong as to enable you to say “*He doth it.*” Then will it assuredly be unto you according to your faith.

‘Do not be discouraged when you fail. It is right to be sorrowful and penitent over failure, but discouragement usually comes from mortified self-esteem. However great your failure, *return at once* to your Saviour, confessing that you alone are to blame for the fall, and believing that He loves

you still with a tender, patient, pitiful love, and waits to restore you. You speak of getting *it* and keeping *it*. Think less of *it* and more of *Him*, as a Friend who is with you every day and all day long.'

1890

'The best way to answer the questions of your friend is to ask her what her own experience has taught her on the subject about which she writes. It appears to me that if the Spirit had willed that all Christians should have precisely the same experience, He would not have left room for so much diversity of view amongst the fully consecrated. No doubt she may have received what we call the baptism of the Spirit simultaneously with full salvation. In others the fire of love to God and men has gradually and steadily increased in intensity as they prosecuted their Christian work. There seem to have been some—like Finney, for example—who have received the baptism of the Holy Ghost without any definite consciousness of entire sanctification. . . . The chief element in spiritual power is *love*—tender, burning, Christlike love, no matter how it comes. . . . Don't worry. Take time. The Spirit of truth will guide you into all truth, so far as you need to know it.'

1900

'The first aim of class-leaders should be to minister to the spiritual progress of their members. If you make this your leading thought, you will be

rightly guided in respect of methods. You may have what is in reality an "experience class," without following the old lines. It is important to set the members at their ease. There cannot be much profit where there is discomfort, and to some people compulsion to speak is a misery. When you come to a good understanding with each other, you might suggest that the last half hour should be given to voluntary testimony. . . . Don't let the work become a burden to you. Do the best you can in the Lord's strength, and leave results with Him.'

. . . . .

' It seems to be quite usual for influenza . . . to leave nervous trouble behind it. It is a great point gained when we know what is the matter with ourselves, and do not attribute the irritability and depression to spiritual causes. We are to see the Lord's will in these things, and ask no questions. When the physical law of our nature says "rest!" we must rest, knowing that we are doing the Lord's will as really as if we were engaged in the hardest and most important labour. We are not responsible for the work that is left undone. The Lord will get it done somehow. The lesson we have to learn is to be content to do *nothing*, without inquiring the reason why, satisfied to know that thereby God's will is being done. It is more important that we should be trained to trust God in the dark than that we should do great things for Him.'

1902

' What impresses me more and more deeply as I grow older with respect to the holy life is that it

is *the* Christian life—the normal life which all God’s children ought to live always. I think that as Methodists we have treated it too much as an exceptional attainment, reached only by the chosen few. Not that we have said this, but the effect of our mode of putting the truth has led to an impression of that sort. What we need to remember is that our God is never satisfied with anything less than the absolute surrender of our redeemed selves to Him, and that it is the will of Christ to be to us, now and always, a full Saviour. How much we have in Him ! ’

1902

‘ Thank you very much for the *London Quarterly*. . . . Like you, I have found the number very interesting, and all its articles readable. It is rarely that any one person can say this of an entire publication of this kind. With respect to the paper you name, “ The Seat of Authority in Religion,” I read and thought a good deal about the subject many years ago, and never in these days find anything new.

‘ “ The soul in communion with God ” may serve very well for a definition—identical, so far as I can see, with the “ inner light ” of the Quakers—but it needs a good deal of qualification. Old Testament saints, following the inner light, did things which, if I were to do them, would land me in the police-court and the jail. George Fox, a very holy man, was led occasionally into what we should call outrageously immoral conduct. Jonathan Martin, a Christian man, my mother’s Sunday-school teacher, heard

an inward voice telling him to burn down York Minster. There is a holiness sect in Canada, originating in Methodism, who teach that the Holy Spirit is, to those who receive Him in His fullness, an infallible guide of life. One of them stood up in a testimony meeting awhile ago, and said that he had long given up reading the Bible ; it belonged to the beggarly elements." It is clear therefore that we need some outside regulating influence. The Catholics, Romish and Anglican, find it in the Church. J. H. Newman convincing himself that the Epistles were never meant to furnish a complete rule of conduct and standard of doctrine, but were written to meet passing needs, and yet feeling that he must have an infallible guide, ended in Rome, and from that time laid his intellect at the feet of the Church.

' This is the charm of Anglicanism and Romanism to sincere, weary souls seeking rest. The priest says, " Cease to trouble and worry, commit yourself to me ; I will be the voice of the Church to you, and tell you everything you ought to do." And no doubt this brings great rest—of a sort. But as in the case of the Canadian, though in another way, it requires the prostration of the intellect. As Protestants we believe that the Bible is the one infallible rule of faith and practice. But even amongst Protestants what varieties of opinion there are with respect to the morality of theatre-going, balls, cards, and twenty other things !

' It appears to me that each one of us should live in the condition described by our Lord, when He said, " If thine eye be single thy whole body shall

be full of light"—that in this spirit we ought to seek to learn the will of God as revealed in the written word, but that in the interpretation of the word some regard must be paid to the universal Christian conscience, this being the product of the accumulated wisdom of Christian people. There will still be what may be called neutral ground. That is, there will be questions which each must decide for himself only. We are too ready to conclude that what *we* cannot do nobody ought to do—in direct contradiction to the teaching of St. Paul on these matters. We have to accept the fact, at first perhaps rather humiliating and disappointing, that there is no such thing as infallible guidance. The Lord Jesus Christ, if we commit ourselves to Him, will save us from everything that would separate us from His love, or that would bring a stain upon our Christian character. But we shall make mistakes both in conduct and creed, for no one holds all the truth. Humility, teachableness, tolerance, transparent honesty are virtues to be cultivated to the end.'

1905

'What a change has come over our people during the last half century! There are in my drawer sermons that in former days were used in bringing great numbers of sinners to Christ, but which now I simply could not preach. If I did I should burden the people's hearts, and drive them out of the place. There is not the same sense of sin. Men's consciences do not so readily respond to appeals founded on their need of forgiving mercy. They are told to



accept the Lord Jesus Christ as a Saviour, who will give them the victory over temptation and keep them straight. I doubt whether the new teaching makes such sturdy Christians as the old. My position seems to be about half-way between the two.

1906

‘ The books of travel that I like to read are those which describe *people*, their manners and customs, their habit of thought, and their beliefs.

‘ Humanity, here and all over the world, is, I think, of all studies the most attractive. I care less for abstract and dogmatic theology than formerly, and prefer it as I find it in the Bible and all sorts of books which enable me better to understand man’s way to God, and which illustrate “ the ways of God to men.” In this direction modern psychology (what an ugly word !) is very helpful and very fascinating, so long as one is careful to cling closely to the great truth that God is a Father who thinks and loves, and that Jesus Christ is the revelation of God and the world’s Redeemer. But how little we know of ourselves and our identity ! I often think of St. Paul’s words, “ We shall know even as also we are known.” Who shall say how much that means ? ’

1911

‘ Now that you are less able to work for Christ, it is left to you as to others of us to *shine* for Him, and just *be* Christians where His providence has placed us. I sometimes think that when the rewards

are distributed, the brightest crowns will be found on the heads of those who shone for the Master, making deeper impressions upon outside observers than were made by all the sermons they heard. May we have grace to let our light shine before men ! ’

1911

‘ Nerves are troublesome companions. They refuse to be silent or quiescent, and will persist in asserting themselves, to our great discomfort. Wesley says somewhere that there was a time in his life when he did not think the grace of God was sufficient to keep in peace a Christian with disordered nerves, but that he had come to be of another mind.

‘ I think the “ other mind ” was right. God can keep in peace in all conditions of health. We have gained a great point when in our distresses we have learned to distinguish between the physical and the spiritual. I pray that God will make all grace abound toward you.’

\* \* \* \*

TO MRS. T——

‘ Jan. 17, 1911.

‘ I was glad to see your handwriting, and to receive the postcard. If I have been long in acknowledging it, let it be my excuse that I am bedridden and helpless, and am not able to do much letter-writing—one letter now and then.

. . . . .

‘ This life of passive waiting, unable to do anything for myself, is a great change from one of independence and activity, but we have many lessons of all sorts to learn before our education is complete. The doctor does not at all expect a speedy change; he says my pulse is too good. Nor have I much pain. Breathlessness is my great trouble. I seek grace to “ rest in the Lord ” trustfully and cheerfully until in His wise pleasure He is pleased to call me into His own bright presence, when I know that I shall say to Him, as did the people in the days of His flesh, “ He hath done all things well.” ’

‘ June 13, 1911.

‘ My correspondence is in arrears; letter-writing becomes increasingly difficult. I have old friends to whom I have ceased writing, and who no doubt wonder why; but I must send you a line to say how deeply sorry I am to hear of your sickness. A year ago I suffered in just the same way, but the doctor kept me in bed spite of my protests, and gradually the disease subsided until now—so far as I know—it is gone. In some respect, your case is worse than mine, inasmuch as you have the burden of secular care, whereas I have none; but “ My God shall supply *all your need* according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” ’

. . . . .

‘ My disease is the incurable one of old age, with its increasing feebleness for which there is no remedy. I pray that if it be His will He may

speedily restore you, and spare you to be a shining Christian.

‘ And now what can I do but ask you to remind yourself of all the precious promises, and all the assurance of the divine wisdom and love with which you have sought to help and comfort other of God’s children in their times of trouble? May these be applied with great sweetness and power to your own heart, keeping you in perfect peace amid these dark days. I am unable to write more, but be sure you are not forgotten in my prayers.’

‘ *July 22, 1911.*

‘ God has indeed chosen you in the furnace of affliction. When I read your letter I felt that all I could do was to pray for you, asking that God would touch your poor body, relieving you of your pain and restoring you to some degree of health ; or else that He would give you such bright visions of His lovingkindness and tender care as would make it easy for you, even amid so much mystery, to accept cheerfully His gracious will. For suffering *is* a mystery, but the uniform teaching of the Word is that suffering borne in patience is a blessing. I daresay you look back with thankfulness upon the time when you were enabled to *do* the will of God in bringing sinful men and women to the Saviour. It may be that there is a future period when you will look back with still greater thankfulness upon the light affliction which was but for a moment, but which was working for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

. . . . .

‘ For the rest, I am never to leave my bed any more in this life, because of the danger of heart failure in one of my rather hard fights with breathlessness. The doctor thinks that with extreme care I may last a long while. Death from syncope has no terrors for me. My times are in the Lord’s hand. I know He will deal with me wisely and kindly, and that all will be well. I am therefore at rest in that matter. But how much lighter is my burden than yours, inasmuch as, at least at present, I am free from pain! For this I feel, every day of my life, that I have cause for great thankfulness to God. God bless you, and in His own way send you help from the Sanctuary, and open your way in temporal matters.’

‘ *Aug. 4, 1911.*

‘ I will not trouble you with a long letter, but write a line to assure you of my deep sympathy with you, and my earnest prayers for you in this time of your sickness. Humanly speaking, you are nearer to the end than I am. May the Saviour, who during your changeful career has given you so many tokens of His lovingkindness and tender care, be very consciously near to you, bringing home to your spirit His own precious promises, and filling your heart with His own peace, making you quite content to lie in His hands whatever betide. He is always nearest to us when we need Him most.’

‘ *Aug. 24, 1911.*

‘ “ The Lord bless thee and keep thee. The Lord make His face shine upon thee, and be gracious

unto thee : the Lord lift up His countenance upon thee and give thee peace."

' As in your last letter you said you were not *worse*, I am venturing to hope that by this time you have taken a little turn for the better ; or that it will please God, if not to give you full health, yet to restore you so far as to enable you to look after the matters that require your attention. In the meanwhile—*Rest in Him*. This is all I have to say to-day, not being myself in good writing trim, though I am more thankful than I can tell to be free from pain. My doctor is always reminding me how wonderful my case is in that respect. God forbid that I should be ungrateful. Here is a precious promise: "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain *thee*"—that is to say, He will carry both you and the burden. Is not that enough? '

' *Sept. 18, 1911.*

' My circumstances are not very favourable for writing, but I must send you a short line of sympathy. I am sorry that the medical opinion is so unfavourable, but it is better to know the truth than to be kept in suspense. I trust it will please the Lord to give you some degree of recovery ; and though you may have to live in some degree of disability, it does not follow that you will glorify Him in a less degree, or have less of the comfort and joy of the Holy Spirit in your own heart. What a happy thing it was that when St. Paul prayed that the thorn in the flesh "might depart from him," the Lord Jesus Christ was not pleased to answer his

prayer in that particular way, but that the answer was given in a promise that brought rest and joy to his own heart, and that has been the comfort and stay of tens of thousands of Christian believers since his day : " My grace is sufficient for thee, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." May you know by a blessed experience all that the promise means, enabling you, like Paul, even to take pleasure in afflictions and to cry, " When I am weak, then am I strong." In the meanwhile *live in the present*. Live a day at a time, leaving the rest with God ; He will gradually open out His will concerning you. Assuring you of my prayers on your behalf.'

. . . . .

' I (C. E. T.) wrote to Mr. Brash, telling him that on Sunday, December 17, when many were praying for my recovery, I had found a message in Jer. xlv. 11, which seemed to me that God had directed me to it, to tell me I should *not recover*, and asked his opinion of it ; and the following is his answer :

' Dec. 23, 1911.

' The Lord bless you and keep you, and during this Christmas time give you conscious revealings of your divine, human Saviour, bringing some brightness into your heart as you remember His sympathy and tender love. I do not think that God is, as a rule, pleased to reveal to us our temporal future, either through passages of Scripture or any other medium. What He requires from us is our absolute *trust*. " Who is he among you that feareth the Lord,



that obeyeth the voice of His servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light, let him *trust* in the name of the Lord and stay upon his God."

'A more fitting line to be on your lips, and in your heart, than either of those passages from Jeremiah is that in Ps. xxxi. 15, "My times are in *Thy* hand." Receive that truth into your inmost soul, *living in the present*, and God will reveal Himself from day to day, enabling you to say "Thy will be done," and giving you inward peace even in the midst of physical sickness and suffering. I am not myself in a very fitting condition to write, but felt I must just send you a line that might be helpful to you.'

£ Jan. 24, 1912.

'I had been wondering how you were progressing, and was just about to write when your post card came. I am sorry you are not better, but venture to hope, even yet, that if God is not pleased to restore you fully, you will be able to get about with the aid of a stick and look after the affairs of daily life. In the meanwhile, "The eternal God is thy refuge; and underneath are the everlasting arms."'

. . . . .

'I sometimes think that one part of the blessedness of the coming time will be our ability to trace, in the light of heaven, the guiding hand of God through all the difficulties, the discouragements, and the hindrances that beset us in this mortal life, and to admire His wisdom and ceaseless care in bringing us safe home. Every day we owe more

to Him than we know. How plain it will be that what seemed to us, at the time, to be great obstacles were really protections from peril, and aids to more perfect union with God in Christ !'

' *Feb. 20, 1912.*

' It was a great pleasure to me to read the contents of your post card. I join you in thanksgiving to God for His delivering mercies, and trust that the doctor's hopefulness will be justified, and that, although you may not recover full health and strength, you will be sufficiently restored to get about, and look after the things of daily life with comfort to yourself. Your case is one in which the Apostle's words apply to you with special fitness and power : " I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the *mercies of God*, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto Him, which is your reasonable service." Excuse a short letter. I am not myself in good writing trim, but God is doing all things well, and leading me by the right way to the city of habitation.'

' *March 15, 1912.*

' I must send you just a brief line to say how much I sympathize with you in your suffering, and how earnestly I pray to God that if it be His will He will touch you with the finger of His power, and cause it to pass away. Or if He cannot in His love to you do that, He will grant you His grace through Jesus Christ, so that your strength shall be as your day ; that may be the greatest blessing of all. Do not yield for a moment to the temptation that affliction is a

token of the divine disapproval ; the truth is all the other way. “ Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. . . . What son is he whom the Father chasteneth not ? ” He has given you over to the care of your adorable Redeemer. If you could only see the tenderness, the pitiful compassion of His heart as He looks upon you, watching for the fulfilment of His great purpose, to fit you for all His will in this life and the life to come ! He will make it all clear to you some day. “ *I will show him my salvation.* ” He shall form his own opinion of it, and tell Me what he thinks about it. What do you think the answer will be ? ’

## CHAPTER XX

### 'IN AGE AND FEEBLENESS EXTREME': THE CLOSE OF THE DAY

Lengthening Shadows—An Invalid's View of Things—The Vestibule of the Unseen—Fourscore Years—God's Drawings—His Father's End—Reflections on Old Age—The Mystery of the Hereafter—His Will be Done!—Studying Jesus Christ—The Christian's Certainty—A Humbled Soul—Remembering all the Way—His Last Intercessions—'The Day Thou gavest, Lord, is Ended.'

Thou who hast made my home of life so pleasant,  
Leave not its tenant when its walls decay;  
O Love divine, O Helper ever present,  
Be Thou my strength and stay.

Be near me when all else from me is drifting;  
Earth, sky, home's pictures, days of shade and shine,  
And kindly faces to my own uplifting  
The love which answers mine.

—Whittier.

WE now approach the period of seclusion, languor, and wasting away, amid the lengthening shadows of the final event. For nearly two years John Brash was confined to his bed. Happily the severer sufferings were abated, and the appointed months of weariness were not without their compensations. Surely never was invalid tended more lovingly and unweariedly than this 'brother beloved.' His sick-chamber was a veritable *Dulce*

*Domum*—an abode of perfect peace. His books were around him, his fountain-pen was in frequent use, friends called to cheer him and be cheered ; a slow-combustion stove during the winter months kept his room at an equal temperature ; and, best of all, his spiritual atmosphere was that ‘ peace of God which passeth understanding.’ Very precious to the receiver were the pathetic letters of this closing period.

The selections in this chapter give a view, as through a window, of the pilgrim’s advance toward the River of Death and toward the Land of Rest, already in sight.

#### AN INVALID’S VIEW OF THINGS

‘ During the last few days I have been contrasting my quiet secluded life with that of the world outside, divided as it is over the great questions of Licensing, Education, Socialism, House of Lords, Home Rule, and Welsh Establishment. Happy they who, amid the turmoil and the strife, maintain such a blessed relation to God in Christ as shall enable them to live in love and charity with their neighbours. How hard it is even for Christians on opposite sides to abstain from misrepresentation of each others’ opinions and imputation of wrong motives ! Hardest of all, I think, to be supremely anxious for the conversion of men from sin to holiness and the extension of Christ’s Kingdom. And therefore, seeing how close are the limitations of human nature, there is still a place for those who, while in sympathy with all forward movements of every sort, are much on Mount Carmel. There is comfort

in the thought that the life of inaction need not be useless.'

A few years earlier, when tokens of the approaching end appeared, he wrote :

' I find myself growing quite familiar with the thought of an early cessation from all public work. A life of inactivity has no charm or attraction for me, though, of course, I am willing to live it if the Lord so ordains. Unhappy it cannot be, so long as my blessed Master continues to me the abiding sense of His presence—" a living, bright reality." Edward Smith's motto was " Satisfied with Jesus," H. P. Hughes', " Thou, O Christ, art all I want." I am thankful to be able to add the next line, " More than all in Thee I find." '

In this spirit his active ministry closed, and with serene faith and absolute acquiescence in the beautiful will of God, he entered upon the waiting, lengthened period. He still read his daily paper and several religious weeklies, discussed the questions of the moment, and, as he was able, quietly carried the interests of the Church, as well as the wider movements of West and East, to God in prayer. ' But,' he asks, ' What has a worn-out old invalid like me, with one foot in the grave, to do with these matters ? '

#### THE VESTIBULE OF THE UNSEEN

' I am still confined to bed, and, so far as I can see, am likely to be for weeks to come. The doctor calls, looks at my leg, feels it, says I am doing very nicely, and when I speak of sitting up, just runs away

saying, " Lie still till I come again." To tell the truth, I don't myself think that I am ready. Whether I ever shall be is sometimes a matter of doubt. So there is nothing for it but to be quiet,

Sweetly waiting at Thy feet,  
Till all Thy will be done.

Anyhow, if on the ground of age alone, I am in the vestibule of the unseen state. Any day the door may open, and I may find myself with the other branch of our great Father's family.'

Sometimes, at the end of a letter dealing with men and movements, or giving accounts of his sickness, he would throw into a closing sentence some brief expression of his personal experience :

' Don't think I am in a complaining mood. I can sing to myself every night : " How do Thy mercies close me round ! " Every day I am thankful that the great problems of providence and grace have long ceased to disturb me. I know that God is love, and that—

All the attributes divine  
Are now at work for me.

I can see and *feel* love in it all, and am satisfied.'

He knew what was coming, and faced the future with serenity. The two friends were descending the slope, he a little ahead.

#### FOURSCORE YEARS

After his birthday, marking the attainment of fourscore years, he wrote :

' To think that I am in my eighty-first year !



I am an old fossil, belonging to a former period. But I shall soon be young again—clothed with my house from heaven.

‘I read very little—not being capable of close and long-continued attention. Even in the New Testament (Weymouth) I read more in the Gospels and the Acts than the Epistles, though the latter are not neglected. The great truth which unfolds itself with increasing clearness and fullness to me is that there is in Christ “sufficient sovereign saving grace” for all men, and that every sinner, however wicked, is very close to all the blessings of salvation if he will only *turn*. I think that in former days I was afraid of people being saved too easily. God’s goodness to me personally in Jesus Christ is so manifest that I wonder that I could ever have doubted.’

Again :

‘Death from syncope has no terrors for me. I consider it a very merciful method of removal from this world to a brighter. And I have perfect confidence in my Saviour, I know He will deal with me wisely and lovingly, and all is well. My chief trouble is the thought of being a burden and care to others who will nurse me, knowing what must inevitably be the end of it. But divine grace is equal to my requirement in that respect also.’

#### GOD’S DRAWINGS

‘But God is with me in the night seasons, giving me songs. Yesterday I seemed to be almost overwhelmed with the thought of His *active love* to me in Christ—not only His willingness to supply all my

need if I fulfil the conditions, but His *yearning* to draw me into closer union with Himself. May there be no hindrance on my side ! ’

. . . . .

‘ How time flies ! The night cometh ! The night cometh ! is what I seem to be hearing constantly. I feel sad over the past, but far from despondent. It is blessed to live under the forgiveness.’

#### HIS FATHER’S END

‘ I am deeply impressed with what you say about the time coming when the idea of re-arranging life fades away, and we feel that “ we must just go on.” To-morrow, in the renewal of the Covenant, I shall accept the Lord’s promises without making any of my own. I have made too many. I shall cheerfully respond to His conditions and “ just go on.” Thanks be to Him for the living Mediator of the Covenant, and *His* constant presentation of His great sacrifice—“ On my behalf.”

‘ When my father was on his sick-bed, some Christian friend, to comfort him, spoke of his past usefulness. Gathering up all his remaining strength, he promptly said, “ That’s a rotten prop ! ” ’

#### REFLECTIONS ON OLD AGE

At other times, on one of his ‘ better days,’ he would give his views and experiences more at length, consenting that portions of his letters should be read to a friend of his friend.

‘ Thanks for the article from *The Spectator* on old age and death. But I doubt whether there is any approach to uniformity of experience. Doctors will tell you that those who lie upon sick-beds, the old, as a rule, cling more tenaciously to life than the young. Claudius Clear appears to have been fascinated with the subject of age for a long time. Again and again he recurs to it—the age at which men do their best work, &c. I have thought that there is in it something personal. He begins to wonder how it is going to be with himself. Perhaps he is conscious of failure. Though it is not usually like that. In most cases a man’s waning power is much more patent to others than to himself.

‘ You speak of a growing sense of the greatness and the infinity of God. That which has grown upon me during my sickness (the indoor life as contrasted with the outdoor may have had something to do with it) has been a sense of the immanence of God, with the deepening feeling that it is the immanence of LOVE. As an orthodox believer I have always held the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity. But as I look back, I see that my thought was too much of the Trinity. Now I am more deeply impressed with the Unity. The love of the Son is the love of the Father and the love of the Spirit—ONE LOVE. I understand better the old mystic who said, “I sought the world over for God, and at last found Him—in my own heart.” I know this is commonplace. There is much of it in Charles Wesley. But in my own mind there has been a transference which is very real. Oh, how near is God! How near is LOVE!

‘ My habits of thought are not readily adapting

themselves to my changing circumstances. Heretofore that which has been most present with me has been efficiency as a pastor and preacher. My prayer has been to be God's instrument in the conversion of sinners and the edification of believers.'

#### MYSTERY OF THE HEREAFTER

'I was born too late. . . . There is compensation in the thought that I shall be the sooner home, away from the labour and the care. How very little the Bible tells us about the condition of the blessed dead ! To a man living in the border-land like myself it is almost impossible not to speculate. I have to end it all by saying with Baxter, that

'tis enough that Christ knows all  
And I shall be with Him.

. . . . .

'In the meanwhile' all that a man like me can do is to lie still and pray "Lord, revive Thy work!" in the hope that the great Intercessor will join the feeble cry to myriads like it, forming one petition to the God and Father so mighty as to open the windows of heaven, and bring down the blessing for which we are all waiting.'

#### HIS WILL BE DONE !

'My whole life is a problem, I used to look forward to an indulgent Sabbath-keeping at the end, but soon found that that was not to be. Something

must be put into life. But what? There are hours in succession when I can neither read nor think nor pray, nor do anything but just trust, and that mostly for myself, and that does not appear to be right. May God be my guide! If in His wisdom He can find me a shorter way to the end than that by which He is now leading me or seems to be leading me, I shall be thankful.'

These lines were written in a trembling handwriting; yet it was nearly twelve months before he entered upon 'the rest that remaineth.'

. . . . .

'So the end of it all is, "How good is God to me if I will only be quiet, and not trouble myself about other people, but receive my blessings through the channels in which He pleases to send them. *I am thankful*, and know that all is well, whether the end may come after long lingering, or suddenly, as it so often comes to old men."'

So the days passed till he reached the beginning of that year which was to be his last on earth. His mental vigour remained, he turned more and more to the essentials, finding in the Word of God at once his soul's medicine and food. We have seen how as his spirit matured in grace, his very *life* was in union with Christ his Lord, just as He recognized that *His* life lay in His relation to His Father: 'I and my Father are one'; 'the Son can do nothing of Himself.' He felt that in the cultivation of this lay his imperative duty. If we ask how he succeeded, the answer is, that by study of the Gospels he came in close touch with his Lord's thoughts and the

ruling principles of His life ; then through the Holy Spirit's indwelling he imbibed His Spirit, until the very *tone* of his dispositions became Christlike. And it was by ceaseless endeavour to express this in action that his life was perfected. In this union with his Lord and Saviour he enjoyed the 'life which is life indeed.'

#### STUDYING JESUS CHRIST

It was thus that his mind found its satisfaction in the study of his Lord's character and history, and in the deeper union with Him.

'But how great a comfort it is to be able to say with a trustful heart, "my times are in Thy hands," and to rest in confidence that God, in His infinite wisdom and tender love, will do all things well. When all is said, a man of my years is liable to sudden seizures. "It is the unexpected that happens."

'I have just read the first half of St. Matthew's Gospel, containing the record of our Lord's earlier Galilean ministry. What a remarkable ministry it was! Striking discourses and parables, great crowds hanging upon His lips, hosts upon hosts of sick and lame people instantaneously restored and sent on their way rejoicing. It was a wonderful time—till the shadows began to fall. It is to me clear that all the while He saw before Him the persecution, Gethsemane, the Cross. But He could not make His disciples understand. They loved Him to adoration, and yet He was lonely. Lying on my bed I try to understand. But there are depths!'

## THE CHRISTIAN'S CERTAINTY

Our correspondence still at times had reference to the changes in modern theological thought.

'The lesson of these uncertainties seems to be that Christ denies Himself to the man who seeks Him with the intellect only, but to those who search for Him with submissive wills and open hearts He grants spiritual illumination, and in the New Testament reveals Himself as the Saviour they need. Committing themselves to Him in utter obedience and trust, they find rest and peace, and in a bright experience have a clearer and more abiding evidence of the Risen Christ than the best attested document could give. "Even so, Father," &c. Experience in the face of assaults from geology, biology, psychology, evolution—experience is and always will be the convincing evidence of Christianity. Amid the things that are shaken *this* remains.'

## A HUMBLING SOUL

A Christian man never realizes what his unworthiness has been until he reaches the height of a matured experience. It is as if a man had spent many years upon an island without knowing that it was an island, until, climbing a hill he beholds his dwelling encompassed by the measureless sea. So vast, so all but infinite, does the Christian see his faultiness. He would despair but for the knowledge that the grace of Jesus is larger—as much larger as the infinite is larger than the finite.

'Give me the lowest place,' John Brash would cry with Christina Rossetti. Again and again comes



the same reference to failure and even 'lost years.'

'I am trying to spend my Sunday profitably, and in fellowship with God's people everywhere. But I am not of those who believe it easier to wait upon God in affliction than in health. I receive great and kind attention from friends, ministerial and other, and am very far from having cause of complaint. But they do not understand me. Their talk and prayer are full of reference to my past career and my usefulness. My thought and feeling do not go with them in the least degree. I see my life to have been a great failure. Quite honestly I am overwhelmed with humiliation and shame as I think of it. My one cry is—

O Love, Thou bottomless abyss,  
My sins are swallowed up in Thee.

It is no use to tell them all this. It would seem to them a display of humility.'

#### REMEMBERING ALL THE WAY

'I fear that there are sincere people whose thoughts are so full of the Lord's Coming that they fail to see all He waits to be to them as a *present* Saviour. I found many of them in my Keswick work in this country and in Canada.

'I had a quiet Sunday. My eyes would not stand much reading, so I closed my eyes and remembered all the way by which He had led me. I could see mercy at every turn of my life. How intent God has been upon saving me! But I was once rather roughly pulled up by C——, who said in his characteristic way, "Don't get the idea that you are a

favourite of heaven.” Good counsel, leading one to consider how much God is doing for everybody, even those who will not come to Him.’

It is touching to read how his mind dwelt on the state of the Church, and the longing to bear his part—if not by effort, at least by prayer—in its revival.

#### HIS LAST INTERCESSION

‘We *do want* a more earnest Christian life in the churches, and more real fellowship with Jesus Christ and His God and Father.

‘The other morning I could not get on at all in prayer, especially intercessory prayer—everything seemed so formal. So I began with the Lord’s Prayer for my text, petition by petition, and soon found great enlargement. I have done the same thing more than once with much profit to myself, and I trust to others.’

#### THE CLOSE OF THE DAY

It only remains to give, in the words of the Rev. E. Barraclough, the Wesleyan minister at Wavertree, some impressions of his character, and his account of the closing scene :

‘I count it a priceless privilege that I was permitted to visit Mr. Brash during that time. Some of those conversations in the sick-room will never be forgotten.

‘I was often impressed by his mental clearness and strength. He was spared the cloud, and retained this clearness almost to the last. Less than a week before he died, he discussed an article

in the *Hibbert Journal* with singular grasp and power. He gave the service of all his powers. He loved his Lord with all his mind.

‘What a faith he had ! How strong, yet simple, was his confidence in God ! I remember one day he was talking about the life to come. There was nothing ecstatic or demonstrative in his words but the calm of full commitment to God. He concluded by repeating the well-known lines of Baxter :

My knowledge of that life is small,  
The eye of faith is dim ;  
But 'tis enough that Christ knows all,  
And I shall be with Him.

Then after these conversations he would say “Pray with me.” I can hear him now. And how full of grateful appreciation he was for any little service rendered to him. How little the best of us could do for such a man : how much he did for us ! He who derived blessing from the little ministries of others bestowed infinitely more. Always I left him myself richly blessed.

‘How sympathetic he was with his younger brethren in their difficulties and the problems of their work ! He understood ; he counselled ; he encouraged. To me the message and meaning of this ministry are more real and glorious, because I have known John Brash. He loved the Methodist Church, and ardently sought her highest good.

‘Our friend knew the Spring that keeps life fresh, sweet, strong.

‘It was in the afternoon that I heard from Miss Brash that he was very weak, and that the doctor had told them that the end was near. I went over

to Sandown Terrace, and had a conversation with his brother, Mr. Robert Brash. About ten o'clock I called again. I was just preparing to leave when Mrs. Charlesworth came downstairs, and told us that he was only just breathing. We all went upstairs—the two sisters, Mr. Robert, and myself—and about twenty minutes past ten our friend passed away. There was no sign of struggle, but perfect calm. Just before the end a smile came over his face. It was beautiful, and I cannot tell you how much it impressed me. It was the beauty and triumph of God's peace. It was the Rest at the close of life's little day, and underneath were the Everlasting Arms. When we came downstairs, Mr. Robert spoke with deep feeling of the peaceful end. I have many times thought of that night, and often there have come to me the words, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." "

The Rev. Walter Hawkins has contributed the following reminiscences :

'The name of the Rev. John Brash had for many years been familiar to me, and had a dignity all its own. Perhaps for that very reason I thought, when I found he was retiring as a supernumerary to the Grove Street Circuit, Liverpool, whither I was going in 1891 as a minister, that my acquaintance with him would only be remote. But our lives soon became interlaced. I was ordered to Egypt to recover from nervous exhaustion, and, as my wife could not leave home, it seemed as if I must go alone. Whether solitude or uncongenial company would be the greater tax on disordered nerves it was difficult to say. Little thinking of the

fruit it would bear, I let a wish fall from my lips that so serene a presence as our departed friend's could be a "journeying mercy." He was told of it; and although at the time the expedition had its physical discomforts and even risks for him, he felt drawn to relieve the stress of more hearts than one, and he went.

' For the greater part of two months I lived with him, aboard and ashore, day and night, and came to know the placid depths of his character. We sailed in March, 1892, on the *Anubis* from Liverpool via Gibraltar, Algiers and Malta to Alexandria. Swiftly he set himself, with a wisdom for which I shall never cease to be grateful, to the task of re-establishing my self-reliance, which had been wounded in the war of mind and nerves. No one at that time could foresee the complete recovery of nerve power which God has since permitted me to enjoy, and it seemed as if the life of a comparative invalid might be mine. Instead, therefore, of giving me, as many friends did, more general, and to me incredible, assurances that I should be all right soon, he, in long conversations on deck, and at night in the cabin we two occupied alone together, followed a more excellent way. For my sake he quietly related his own physical experiences for twenty-five years back in his active ministry, and wrought steadily upon me the impression that robust and boisterous health was not necessary for good and faithful work, and that with a scant measure of strength a man may achieve noble results.

' This wrought the effect he intended: it changed the incidence of my thought from health (*per se*) to the possible task of the day: it saved

me from disappointments as strength, in slow instalments, returned. But it had also an effect he would not be anxious to promote. It made me admire his heroism. More than twenty years before he had crept into a new circuit with spent strength and a weak heart ; he had quietly adjusted his conditions to his necessities, and, surrendering luxuries, had made it his one concern to continue "the ministry which he had received from the Lord Jesus to testify the gospel of the grace of God." As he would put it in his own graciously demure way, "While this *one thing* I do, I can do it." He had successfully maintained the superintendency of some of our largest circuits with such weak action of his heart that the ascent of the pulpit stairs brought palpitation, which necessitated his sitting a few moments to recover ere he started the service. His diet would in many years of his life have spelled starvation to most of us, but he would not exhaust his powers in vain attempts to digest more. He knew by experience often repeated that, while he was content with a certain modicum of physical strength, he could thus emancipate his nervous powers for the glorious ministry of the truth. And the fact that he went on preaching for nearly twenty years after his retirement, proved how wisely he had gauged the situation.

'I was delighted with the scope of his human interests as we chatted together through those long Mediterranean days. He was no recluse, though so devoted a saint. There was hardly a province of life over which our conversation did not range, and the information stored in his attentive and retentive mind often surprised me as we touched



on matters I had imagined were remote from his walks of life. The unaffected courtesy which characterized all his relations with his fellow voyagers was very noteworthy: it always struck you as a grace rather than a mere manner. I well recollect a few of the early days of the voyage during which he was very weak through long nausea. It was obvious to me that he was only able to converse with effort, but his gentle persistence in intercourse was a triumph of Christian sympathy. At Malta we found the Rev. Dr. Henry Burton lying in what then appeared a mortal sickness, at an hotel. When one remembers all the noble ministry which he has since maintained by lip and pen it is an admonition to postpone despair at all times.

‘We spent a memorable time in Alexandria and Cairo, and Mr. Brash’s quiet enjoyment of those Eastern cities and deep interest in their motley crowds was delightful to share. He was able, in the heat, to “sit about”—a privilege which he seldom dared to allow himself aboard ship. At the famous pyramids of Ghizeh the vociferous Arabs did their best to disturb his native tranquillity, whereupon one or two were soundly thrashed by the Sheikh, who had a fellow-feeling for such dignity as our friend’s. After an exploration of one of the Pyramids, I expressed surprise at the exertion he had put forth, and he smiled and said, “I have had one of my best lessons in simple faith. I gave up my idea of helping myself, and let the Arab behind and the Arab in front do it all, so their strength was mine.” In one dark chamber an Arab tested, however, his strength of will, and found faith was not inconsistent with resolution. The swarthy



guide extinguished the light, where all was labyrinthine around, and demanded baksheesh. But he had mistaken his man, and there was no misunderstanding the imperative tone in which the man of faith replied, in such English as could penetrate the man's skull, "No light : no baksheesh." And the torch was obediently relit.

'The scenes in those eventful weeks recur often, and one startling reflection came to me in retrospect one day which I have never had any reason to correct, namely, that I could not recall one act, or word, or look which I could not naturally expect from our Lord Himself, were He upon earth again. It is a tribute one may well hesitate to trust in black-and-white, but it is deliberate, and I dare not withhold it. Truly "such honour have *not* all His saints." But I imagine there are many others who knew this saint, and could quite thoughtfully endorse my testimony. Whenever I am tempted to doubt the doctrine of Christian perfection I think of John Brash, my old fellow traveller, and—I press toward the mark.'

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